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ABSTRACT

For implementation prior to and during the first few weeks of field practice, a preservice orientation program was developed to provide student teachers with appropriate philosophical and practical information as well as affective/social support. Students were affiliated with a community college laboratory school and varied widely in ability. Goals of the practicum included facilitating smoother transitions in the laboratory school from semester to semester, lessening anxiety, increasing confidence, and increasing retention in the student teacher program. Planning methods included a survey of prior student teachers in the laboratory school and a survey of otner California community colleges with early childhood education programs. The completed orientation program included a slide show presentation, provision of a folder of written materials, a tour, an introductory staff meeting, and 6 weeks of extended educational content and supportive social interaction. Students experiencing the orientation program found it useful and helpful and felt "better prepared" for field practice, but their reported anxiety levels were still high. In general, however, student retention and attendance were improved following the orientation program. (Author/RH)

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PRACTICUM REPORT

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RESOLVING STUDENT TEACHER STAFFING DIFFICULTIES IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE LABORATORY NURSERY SCHOOL THROUGH PRESERVICE ORIENTATION TECHNIQUES.

PRACTICUM 1 SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

BY

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ABSTRACT

Resolving Student Teacher Staffing Difficulties in the Community College Laboratory Nursery School through Preservice Orientation Techniques.
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Descriptors: Preservice Education/Nursery Schools/Teacher Training/Teacher Role/Field Experience Programs/Child Care Workers/Programs/PreschoolEduation/Community Colleges/Student Teachers/Early Childhood Education.

This practicum created a preservice orientation program to provide community college laboratory school student teachers from a wide ability range with appropriate philosophical and practical information as well as affective/social support prior to, and during the first few weeks of the student's field practice. Goals included smoother transitions in the laboratory school from semester to semester, and lessened anxiety, increased confidence and increased retention in the program for student teachers. Planning methods included a survey of prior student teachers in the laboratory school as well as a survey of the other California Community Colleges with Early Childhood Education programs.

The completed orientation program included a slide show presentation, folder of written materials, tour, introductory staff meeting, and six weeks of extended educational content and supportive social interaction.

The students experiencing the orientation program found it useful and helpful and felt "better" prepared" for field practice, but their reported anxiety levels were still high. Student retention and attendance were improved following the orientation program.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A. AUTHOR'S WORK SETTING, ROLE, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The State of California is distinguished by its unique state wide system of 109 community colleges. These colleges provide vocational education in many fields as well as offering academic preparation at the lower division level; thus, acting as feeder colleges to The State College System as well as to the nine campuses of The University of California. Ninety-five of the community colleges offer instruction in early childhood education and 74.8% (80 colleges) offer a child care and development program (Beck, 1979). Forty-nine community colleges provide a laboratory nursery school for the purpose of training students in Early Childhood Education and related fields, while 35 additional colleges use campus child care facilities for laboratory purposes (Beck, 1977). These programs, while they vary in organization, course structure and requirements, are all designed to train students as aides, child care helpers, student assistants and assistant level teachers for jobs in publically supported children's centers and public and private nursery schools, day care programs, et cetera; and to

prepare students for transfer to a four year institution (Beck, 1979).

Solano Community College, where the author of this practicum is employed, is a medium sized college serving between 9,000 and 10,000 students each semester. It is the only college located within the county. Solano Community College's campus is located in a rural area outside of Suisun City near the junction of Interstate Highways 80 and 680 and is surrounded by orchards, vineyards and small family farms.

According to the 1981 Student Profile (Tilley and Blaha, 1981), the Solano Community College students were most often between 18 and 21 years of age and were primarily part-time students attempting an average of 7.05 units, 51% of the total enrollment was female, 49% was male and 2.3% of the total were disabled students. In the fall of 1981, 64.2% (6518) of Solano Community College students were white, 13.5% (1371) black, 5.8% (592) Filipino, 5.6% (567) Hispanic, 3.7% (372) Asian, 1.2% (125) American Indian and 6% (607) "other" or unknown. (Tilley and Blaha, 1981)

The Early Childhood Education program at Solano Community College is an organized and approved curricular program leading to a 32 unit certificate and/or an A.A. or A.S. degree. In the Spring of 1983, 44 students indicated Early Childhood Education as their major, although many more took Early Childhood Education courses. The Early Childhood Education students are a slightly different group from the campus at large and tend to be overwhelmingly female (93% or

41/44), slightly more often minority (39% or 17/44), and more often older than the general campus population. For instance, of the declared Early Childhood Education majors in the Spring 1983 semester, 55% (24/44) were over 25 years of age and 41% (18/44) were over 30 years of age. 11% (5/44) were over 41 years of age. In contrast only 14% (6/44) were less than 21 years of age, the traditional college age years.

The Early Childhood Education Program at Solano Community College, while similar in many respects to other community college Early Childhood Education programs, is unique in some aspects. For example, possibly because of the rural character of much of the county, many of our certificate level graduates quickly acquire positions at the Head Teacher or even Director level. There are many other job opportunities for Solano Community College Early Childhood Education graduates, also. Vallejo, in particular, has a thriving Children's Center Program and the county as a whole provides 941 preschool centers, 397 day care centers, 11 licensed day care homes and one infant center (County Supervisors, 1981).

Solano is one of only forty-nine community colleges providing an on campus laboratory nursery school program and is one of the few programs which employs college instructors as nursery school teachers. The program employs three full time Community College Instructors and a varying number of part-time instructors primarily responsible for teaching classes at night.

The author is the Master Teacher employed at the Solano Community College Laboratory Nursery School. The Solano Community College Laboratory Nursery School functions as a demonstration school for the entire Solano County community as well as for the campus community. The students and teachers responsible for the program take pride in providing a rich and varied curriculum which demonstrates innovative as well as traditional curriculum modes. The current Master Teacher has initiated a program with a strong cognitive base which takes cognizance of recent research in the areas of language acquisition and math concept learning.

The second primary function of the Solano Community College Laboratory Nursery School is to provide training for the student teachers who do their field practice in the Laboratory Nursery School. Each semester the Laboratory Nursery School is staffed at the discretion of the Director with 6-8 students enrolled in the Early Childhood Education program. These students work 20 hours per week in the Laboratory Nursery School and receive 4 units of credit. The Master teacher supervises the students assigned to her for the entire 20 hours per week they are in the school. This includes direct consultation and supervision during the hour before the children arrive and a daily staff meeting after the children leave. During this staff meeting specific teaching techniques and problems are discussed. Supervision decisions and decisions about curriculum are arrived at through guided discussion.

The responsibilities of the Master Teacher include:

1. Supervision and direction of Solano Community College students completing field practice requirements.
2. Supervision of the 40-44 preschool aged children receiving instruction in the school.
3. Daily program planning and implementation.
4. Daily program evaluation.
5. Administrative responsibilities including coordination with the afternoon teacher and program director.
6. Purchase of supplies and equipment with attention to budgetary constraints.
7. Conducting conferences and meetings with parents of the children.
8. Developmental assessment of children through clinical observation and objective standardized testing.
9. Conducting staff meetings.
10. Additional teaching responsibilities for 3 units in Child Development or Early Childhood Education.

B. DESCRIPTION OF SOLANO COUNTY

With a total land mass of 529,280 acres and water area of 28,930 acres, the county is bounded by rivers or channels on three sides: Putah Creek on the north, the Sacramento River on the east, and the Carquinez Strait and Suisun Bay on the south. A full two thirds of the county is composed of

the level Sacramento River flood plain and the Suisun Marsh. Divided by the low mountains of the Coast Range into two air basins (#2, San Francisco Bay Area and #8, Sacramento Valley); the climate varies from the cool Bay Area temperatures of Vallejo in the south to the more variable temperatures of the "upper county," with an average July high of 95 degrees Fahrenheit. (County Supervisors, 1981)

Although considered one of the Metropolitan Bay Area counties (County Supervisors, 1981), Solano is still in many respects a leisurely paced rural county. Agriculture is still the county's single most important economic activity. The majority of the population is concentrated in the western half of the county along Interstate Highway 80, the major freeway from Vallejo to Sacramento, the state capital.

In July of 1980, Solano County had a total population of 227,900. The ethnic distribution (based on 1970 data) was 85.2% white, 10.8% Hispanic, 9.8% black, 2% Filipino, 0.7% Japanese, 0.6% American Indian, 0.5% Chinese, 0.1% each Hawaiian, Korean and other. The average family income level in Solano County in 1970 was a modest $9,880 with 9.1% below the poverty level and only 20.1% with incomes of $15,000 or more. In June of 1980, there were 88,475 people in the civilian labor force, 81,500 were employed, and 6975 were unemployed, a 7.9% unemployment rate. Solano County is projected to grow (Hasseler, 1982) to 283,400 by 1986, 325,900 by 1991, and to 386,100 by the year 2000. The traditionally strong military presence in the county is

expected to remain stable and therefore numerically at least, a less influential presence.

Solano County has seven cities and eight school districts. In 1980, Vallejo, the largest city, had a population of 75,400. Vallejo, at the far south of the county, is a port city located on the tip of the northern inlet of San Francisco Bay. An old city (by California standards), it has long been depressed economically and has been plagued by high unemployment and high crime rates. There are large minority populations, including Asians, Filipino and Black groups. Fairfield with 58,100 was the second largest city in the county and the county seat, and Vacaville with 42,450 was the third. Both Fairfield and Vacaville are growing rapidly. Next largest was Benecia with 14,000 and others ranged down in size to Rio Vista, the smallest, with 3,030. (County Supervisors, 1981)

CHAPTER II: PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM SITUATION

One of the chronic difficulties associated with preschool student teacher training, a problem which affects any college which cannot provide an on campus laboratory school placement for each of its students, is the charge from community schools that laboratory school training is elitist, unrealistic, and ultimately inappropriate to the skills needed for the real jobs which exist in the community. Such charges are by no means new, at one time even championed by the authorities in the field (Almy & Snyder, 1947), but the "face validity" apparent in student teacher placement in community schools has not been supported by subsequent research which has shown a significant difference in quality of training in favor of laboratory school placement (Murphy, 1980). Indeed, a number of studies have indicated that community based field experience is associated with increased negative attitudes and negative teaching behaviors. Specifically, student teachers became <u>more</u>: authoritarian, rigid, controlling, restrictive, and "custodial;" while becoming <u>less</u>: pupil centered, accepting, and "humanistic"

(Peck & Tucker, 1973; Hoy & Rees, 1977; Zeichner, 1980). Intern teachers exposed to community schools were "shockingly disillusioned;" but, after only one year, an initial desire to treat children "like people" was modified to accepting inflexible, unresponsive, punishing teaching as normful (Tabachnick, 1980). Becher and Ade (1982) have commented on the tendency for preservice teachers to "accept observed classroom practice" (Becher & Ade, 1982, p. 24) and perpetuate the status quo. And, Katz (1977b) has pointed out that, in many communities, "good" practice situations are in short supply.

As is so often true, the economic lure posed by the off-campus placement, though attractive, is not justified by the loss of quality in training such placement provides. Although as recently as 1977, the "Legislative Analyst" declared there to be "no compelling evidence" for state support of on campus Early Childhood Education laboratories (Beck, 1979), the California Community College Chancellor's Office found this declaration "incomplete,, inadequate and unacceptable." Beck (1979) reports Community College Early Childhood Education instructors to be overwhelmingly in favor of on campus laboratory schools.

The one sure way of counteracting charges of inappropriate training in the laboratory school is to insure that the laboratory nursery school training is clearly and unequivocally a richer, more meaningful, and more immediately skill related experience than the alternative community

placement. Typically, the laboratory school is well equipped to accomplish this in terms of adequate supplies, appropriate and well maintained equipment, and, also, in terms of the academic qualifications of staff. One weakness of many laboratory schools, and, specifically perhaps the greatest weakness of the Solano Community College Laboratory Nursery School, is the turnover in student staff each semester.

The morning laboratory nursery school at Solano Community College provides a nursery school experience for 20-22 children each day and a student teacher training experience for six to eight Early Childhood Education majors each semester. The children are often enrolled in the school for a total of two years and a few children each year are completing their third full year in the nursery school. The student teachers, in contrast, may spend one semester or a maximum of two semesters in the laboratory school. With the exception of the Master Teacher (a Solano College Instructor) the continually changing student teachers are the sole staff for the program. The resultant turnover in the nursery school staff created organizational problems and both college students and children experienced difficulties adjusting to the program during the initial weeks of each semester.

During those first few weeks the student teachers expressed considerable anxiety, confusion and uncertainty. They were not sure of where they should be, were not certain of what they should be doing, and had no idea of how they

should be doing it. Their anxiety was sometimes manifested in terms of complaints about what other students were doing wrong. Regardless of manifestation, the anxiety level was reflected in the childrens' behavior. At the start of every semester the children in the laboratory school showed anxiety and discomfort. They asked about the former student teachers and avoided the new students, sometimes directly refusing their help. In addition, there was always considerable "testing" behavior directed towards the new student teachers. Perhaps due to this testing, as well as gaps in Student Teacher supervision, more children sustained injuries during this time.

In contrast to other Solano College classes in which students drop out with increasing frequency as the semester progresses, (censuc week results for Spring 1983 show a 6.5% drop from the first census week totals to the second census week and an 8.7% drop from the first census week to the end of the semester. Students enrolled in the Early Childhood Education Laboratory are most likely to drop out during the first several weeks of school. Typically, if they survive these crucial first few weeks they will complete the remainder of the class.

Because the Early Childhood Education program at Solano Community College is a one year certificate program, and two semesters of the field practice (student teaching) are required for completion, student teachers are typically assigned to the laboratory school on Monday, appear for the

first day on Tuesday, and are actively involved with children and a full scale program on Wednesday. There is scant time for any kind of preservice training or orientation. The prior system for orientation of new student staff was poorly organized, scant, and varied from semester to semester. It consisted primarily of an introductory staff meeting and a conducted tour of the school.

In common with all community college classes, the Early Childhood Education department attracts students from a wide ability range. So wide, that some of the students operate extensively, if not exclusively, on a concrete operational level. The combination on the laboratory nursery school staff of students who are capable of abstract thought combined with students who are primarily concrete operational in their thought created difficulty in devising teacher training approaches which would appeal to, and be effective with, both of these types of students.

The problem to be addressed was the transitional difficulties which resulted from high staff turnover in an existing, ongoing community college laboratory nursery school program at the beginning of each new semester.

B. PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

The problem of orientation of new staff and the decreased quality/efficiency of inexperienced personnel is

one which plagues many of the fields in which periodic turnover in staff occurs. In many fields where new individuals are added to ongoing staff, new staff is characterized by early discouragement and rapid turnover (Meisenhelder, 1981). The skills most helpful to students in school (being able to work independently, follow directions meticulously, and possess cognitive knowledge) are of little help in a laboratory school (or any preschool) setting where working cooperatively, creatively and flexibly are at a premium. Unlike a conventional "course" wherein grades and work are more or less private, teaching in a demonstration - laboratory school can be agonizingly "public." Success depends on the here and now, not the number of references the student has been able to locate at the college library.

The high stress level experienced by new staff during the first few weeks (Meisenhelder, 1981 Everson, Panoc, Pratt & King, 1981) may lead to irreversible staff burnout and turnover. Everson et al (1981) report new staff have fears of being unable to perform in high stress situations and often hold self-imposed expectations for performance which are unrealistically high. In addition to concerns over specific job related skills, new staff worry about their acceptance as a group member. Every work group establishes roles and norms, many of which are not obvious to a new group member and may be violated unknowningly. When group tension is high, scapegoating a new staff member may be used to decrease tension. However if the scapegoated individual

leaves the job, the loss agitates the group further and the likelihood of the cycle repeating is high (Everson et al, 1981).

These problems are particularly acute in fields where incoming staff is inexperienced in the values, mores and systems orientation of the new occupation and where effective orientation and training programs have not been established. This latter problem was unhappily evident at the Solano Community College Laboratory Nursery School. Brim & Wheeler (1966) aver that the purposes of socialization are to give a person knowledge, ability and motivation. They maintain that there are three things a person requires before he is able to perform satisfactorily in any role. He must know what is expected (in behavior and values), must be able to meet the role requirements and must desire to practice the behavior and pursue the appropriate ends. These needs were not being met for laboratory school student teachers at Solano Community College.

Informal questioning of the student teachers from the Spring semester 1982 elicited their requests for more basic information and more direction early in the semester along with their reported feelings of anxiety, feelings of inadequacy and an isolating sense of "I'm the only one who doesn't know what they're doing."

A formal assessment of student feelings and felt needs was conducted via a survey of all available prior student teachers who served with the author of this practicum (See

Appendix A). Surveys were mailed to all of the 28 students who had completed all or some (i.e., one or two semesters) of their student teaching under the author's direction in the laboratory school. Of the 28, four were returned by the Post Office as not deliverable. Nineteen of the 24 delivered were completed and returned, a 79% response rate.

Seventeen of the 19 students completing their student teaching prior to an orientation program reported that their confidence level during the first week was average or below. Of these 17, 11 students reported their confidence level as low or very low, while only two students reported that their confidence level was high. When invited to describe their feelings during the first weeks of school, even one of the two students with a "high" confidence level reported feeling "anxious and apprehensive." In all, of the 19 responding to the survey, 18 students reported feeling "anxious," "scared" and/or "afraid." While two students felt "happy" to be working with children, five students mentioned fears of making a mistake or doing something wrong, and several more mentioned feeling "unsure" or "unprepared."

When students were asked to rate their level of felt prepardness to complete field practice, 15 rated their preparation as average or below while two students felt well prepared and two felt very well prepared. In general, students who rated their preparation as average or above were more likely to have completed some of the Early Childhood Education course work prior to their student teaching

experience. Most of the students (14) saw their co-student teachers as either "pleasant" or "friendly" and had similar perceptions of the Master Teacher. Thirteen students reported feeling "more friendly" with other students as the semester progressed, although this included two students who reported becoming "more friendly with some and less friendly with others." Two students reported becoming less friendly and three reported "no change."

Fourteen students felt their feeling towards the Master Teacher become more friendly; one reported feeling less friendly. Four students wrote in "other." (She provided an example for me to follow. She made me more nervous. My feelings of inadequacy grew. She was some one I could depend on for honest feedback.)

Each student was asked to indicate those kinds of things about which they would have liked to know more before they began teaching. From the list, Table 1, 14 students indicated concern about the "expectations of the Master Teacher," 13 would have liked "more information about the goals of the school," and 10 students requested more information about student responsibilities. Ten students desired more information about individual children, while nine would have liked more information on how to talk with the children. When students were asked to identify which of the items in Table 1 would have helped them the most, six students indicated "expectations of the Master Teacher", four indicated "more about individual children," and four selected

"goals of the school," four indicated "student responsibilities." The other categories had two or fewer responses each. The category "other" contained a variety of responses. From the survey, it seems evident that student teachers experienced high anxiety, and felt very unprepared during the first weeks of student teaching.

TABLE 1

Former Student Teacher Information Requests

Q: What kinds of things would you have liked to know more about before your Laboratory Nursery School staffing began? (Mark an "X" in all those that apply to you)

Total Respondents = 19

		# of Responses	Would Have Helped The Most
A.	School schedule	5	1
B.	Where things are stored in the school	7	1
C.	How to use nursery school equipment	4	1
D.	What are the goals of the school	13	4
E.	Student work hours	1	0
F.	Student responsibilities	10	4
G.	Student weekly assignments	6	2
H.	Know the other student teachers better	7	1
I.	What children of this age are like	5	1
J.	Who the children are	6	0
K.	More about individual children	10	4
L.	How to talk to the children	10	2
M.	The instructor	3	0
N.	Expectations of the Master Teacher	14	6
O.	Other (please explain)	6	0

"Feelings, my confidence grew once I realized other student teachers had similar feelings."
"Student teacher evaluation."
"More about Head Teacher week."
"Philosophy of the Master Teacher and teacher - child relationships."
"Testing of children and parent conferences."
"More about each area of the school."

C. CAUSATIVE ANALYSIS

The students in this (and other) field practice placements are necessarily placed in the field practice class prior to classroom training. In the case of some students, it is probably a misplacement. It is a common assumption in our society that children are easy to work with and, that the younger the child, the easier the task will be. College students who have preselected themselves for training for an "easy job" are uniformily appalled at what the job entails. Another group of students, usually the ones who "just love children," come with the assumption that they are already skilled in this field, either through babysitting or through having had children of their own. Relearning old techniques can be more difficult than first time learning, and in times of stress, earlier learning, even though inappropriate, may surface with detrimental effects. Even in the cases where the field practice student is not misplaced in the field, the early placement with children, prior to training, is a stressful experience. In the words of one student on her first day, "I haven't felt so inadequate since the day I brought my newborn, premature twins home from the hospital." Many less articulate students are experiencing many of the same feelings.

Another dimension which cuts across sex, race, age, and ethnic group is the cognitive level of performance of

students. The best teachers are flexible, thoughtful, and intuitive. Those student teachers who are concrete operational in their thought are rule bound, consistent rather than flexible in their behavior, and have difficulty looking beyond the surface aspects of behavior.

D. THE RELATED LITERATURE

In a wide ranging research review article Kenneth Zeichner (1980) explores the values and limitations of pre-service field-based experiences in teacher education. Challenging the value of practical school experience as essential to the development of better teachers by pointing to research showing inimical latent effects of such experience, Zeichner also challenges the position that field experiences necessarily contribute to student teacher conservatism and rigidity. Citing dozens of references in what seems a careful review of the literature, Zeichner concludes that the students themselves exert significant control over their "occupational socialization" and are not merely passive recipients of the experience. Zeichner calls for more research to study the subtleties of socialization during field-based experiences with the recognition of the individual character and impact of the student teachers.

Other researchers have explored the impact of the student teacher classroom, finding that skill utilization by a student teacher would seem to depend on the degree to which the specific skill acquired in training is congruent with the ecology of a particular classroom (Copeland, 1978).

A recent study by Thies-Sprinthall (1980) explores the interaction between student teacher and supervising teacher in relationship to the cognitive developmental level of each. She suggests that the match (or mismatch) between student teacher and supervisor in terms of cognitive/moral-ethical development is important and significant, basing her hypotheses on the related theoretical works of Hunt and of Kohlberg. Although the study is marred by the small numbers of pairs in two of the groups and by the lack of any reported statistical analysis; Thies-Sprinthall concludes that supervisors of student teachers need a complex conceptual system themselves to be able to select appropriate learning experiences for beginning teachers; and, that the supervisors must be able to accurately "read" individual differences in student teachers, employ a variety of supervision techniques, and provide a humane environment designed for positive growth.

The issue of "humane environment" has been comprehensively reviewed by A.W. Combs (Avila, Combs, & Purkey, 1977; Combs, 1969, 1972, 1979, 1981; Combs, Avila, &

Purkey, 1971; Combs, Blume, Newman, & Wass, 1974). Combs feels strongly that education must be concerned with more than cognitive skills and must produce individuals who behave responsibly and cooperatively. He promotes the value of a humanistic approach in education avering that what students experience about themselves and their world is too important to ignore. Combs (1981) defines humanistic education as "a systematic, conscious attempt to put into practice the best we know about the nature of human beings and how they learn." Combs (1969) suggests it is important to treat prospective teachers early in their training as persons of "dignity, integrity, and worth," (Combs, 1969, p. 34) to enable them to develop positive attitudes. The student teacher needs to feel accepted, wanted and valued. Combs (1979) maintains that competition "destroys feelings of trust in ourselves and in others. The further suggestion that student teachers be able to interact with children in a warm, friendly, cooperative atmosphere and with the exposure to diverse and varying points of view is also valuable.

Combs has commented on the difficulty for the student in transitioning to a program which emphasises beliefs, values, and personal meanings and which evaluates him/her in terms of what he can do rather than on what he knows. (Combs, Avila, & Purkey, 1971) This situation is certainly true of laboratory school student teachers. If Katz's (1977a, 1977b, 1978a, 1978b, 1979) thesis is true, that optimal education for preschoolers requires high warmth and high intensity,

then the intensity is engendered by feeling that what you do is important and significant. It is difficult to be relaxed in situations where high intensity exists. While Combs (1972) acknowledges the logic of changing a person's behavior by direct action (focusing his attention on it, etc.), he maintains that this approach only occasionally produces the kinds of changes for which one hoped.

Combs (1969) research found that the effective group of teachers see the purpose of the teaching task as one of freeing and assisting rather than controlling or coercing. Nash concurs, stating "humanistically conducted groups can be rich sources of creativity when they are supportive, non-competitive and collaborative. The group atmosphere needed is one in which there is much real listening, openness, trust, constructive feedback, and free speculation" (Nash, 1980, p. 14). The members of any group have three major needs: 1) Inclusion (every member feels he/she is an important member of the group); 2) Control (every member feels that he/she has a role in defining the direction; and 3) Humanism (members take the risk of revealing their feelings or caring about the feelings of others) (Millman, 1976). Katz (1978) expresses this idea as "developing the life of the group that's learning together."

The issue of how best to train student teachers in the field of early childhood education is a crucial one. Students leave the community college system after a single short year of preparation amd it is important to make all of

this year count. A humanistic approach to the education of student teachers seems an appropriate and viable option to pursue when planning field practice experiences. Zeichner's (1980) recognition of the student control of (or interaction with) the field practice experience is an important issue to remember. If Zeichner's conclusions are accurate the student teacher will control at least part of his/her own field experience. The direction and effect of the control may well be determined (or influenced) by the student's cognitive developmental level as Thies-Sprinthall (1980) maintains. Becher and Ade (1982) also noted the varying skills and abilities and differing capacities to respond that students bring to their field practice.

In any field new staff have a great need for information about the new job/new system. At the same time new staff members have a finite ability to absorb new information. The problem seems to be to select the most salient aspects of the orientation procedure and to present it in manageable doses.

The characteristics of the individuals being oriented impact on the selection of delivery modes and educational procedures. There is evidence, for example, that teachers of above average students tend to use more indirect techniques than teachers of average and below average students. (Wayne, 1967) Indirect techniques include accepting feelings, praising students, accepting student ideas, and asking questions. Teachers very infrequently criticize above average and average students, but criticize below average

students to a moderate extent. In a similar vein, teachers with average students spend more class time using illustrations (maps, pictures, blackboard) than teachers of above average students. Teachers of below average students rely on illustrations most of all. People feel challenged when they are confronted with problems which interest them and seem to lie within their capacities of solution. People feel threatened when they are confronted with problems with which they do not feel able to deal (Combs, Avila, & Purkey, 1977). Obviously the low ability student will feel threatened by problems well within the grasp of the higher ability student. The effect of threat (even very mild) is to force the person to defend the perceptions he already has. People find it almost impossible to change when feeling threatened (Combs, Avila, & Purkey, 1977). Nash (1980) promotes the ideal of students learning to see each other as learning resources rather than as rivals, in moving towards a humanistic interdependence although he provides no guidelines or practical procedures to follow to accomplish this. Becher and Ade (1982, p. 25) define a "good" field placement as one which provides "1) modeling of good teaching behavior; 2) feedback to the student teacher; and 3) the opportunity for innovation on the part of the student."

CHAPTER III: ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

A. STATEMENT OF GENERAL GOALS

This practicum was designed to better prepare students for their initial student teaching experience and through this preparation to meet goals in three areas -- (Goals for the Laboratory Nursery School, itself; goals for the individual student teachers; and, goals for the Early Childhood Education program.)

For the Laboratory Nursery School, the solution of this problem would result in a smoother transition from one semester to the next with minimal disruption for the children involved and a maximum of continuity for both children and staff.

Goals for the individual student teachers included:

Lessened anxiety, increased confidence, and perhaps increased retention in the program, although hopefully not at the expense of maintaining people in the field who are inappropriate.

Goals for the Early Childhood Education program were:

Increased awareness on the part of the campus community

and the Early Childhood Education programs county wide, that the campus Laboratory Nursery School is a professional training procedure/program and not merely equivalent to community placement.

The goals for the Laboratory Nursery School were difficult to measure, primarily because there were no firm data from prior semesters attesting to the difficulties of transition. Only the Master Teacher's "clinical" judgement of the difference in classroom "tone" from the beginning to the middle of the semester stood in evidence. However, because the effects on the school were directly attributable to the student teachers and because the effectiveness of the program for the student teachers could be measured, inferences as to meeting the goals of the school could be made.

The more general goal for the Early Childhood Education program, the gain in dignity and respect from the campus and wider community is a longer term goal, perhaps best pursued and measured by word of mouth. The best "publicity" our program could have is the confidence of our graduates in the effectiveness of their training. So, once again, the effectiveness of the program for the student teachers is the crux of the problem.

B. BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

The specific behaviorial objectives considered evidence

of having met the general goals of increased student confidence and lessened anxiety are listed below:

1. Students would indicate satisfaction with their initial preparation (orientation) for student teaching as indicated by their response to the evaluation instrument for the preservice orientation. A rating of 75% overall positive responses at the "agree" or "strongly agree" levels for each student was used as the criterion for success.
2. Students would show a serious and responsible attitude towards their student teaching as evidenced by regular attendance. A significant ($p<.05$) increase in attendance during the first six weeks of school over previous semester's would be considered progress. Comparison was made with prior student staffs in each semester beginning in 1979.
3. Students would complete their commitment to the Laboratory Nursery School by not dropping out of the field practice class. 100% retention during the first six weeks of school would be considered successful.
4. The General Goals of lessened anxiety and increased self-confidence were measured by an item analysis of specific questions on an evaluation instrument constructed by the author. (Appendix B)

   As indicated by responses on their evaluation:

   A. Student teachers would see teaching young children as an achievable skill which they

expected to learn. A total of six out of eight students indicating that they "agree" or "strongly agree" with this statement was the criterion of success.

B. Student teachers would feel comfortable asking the Master Teacher for help/advice. If six out of eight students agreed with this statement, a positive evaluation would have been achieved.

C. Students would see the other student teachers as a supportive, helpful group of resources. Six out of eight students in agreement would be the criterion of success.

C. EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Former student teachers who completed their field practice assignments in the Laboratory Nursery School were asked to complete a questionaire indicating their feelings about the effectiveness and content of their preservice orientation. (Appendix A)

To obtain the current student teacher reaction to the new orientation program developed in the practicum, after completion of the orientation program and six weeks of supervised teaching, student teachers were asked to evaluate the orientation procedure using a Likert-type scale developed by the author. This instrument also includes some open ended questions. (See Appendix B) If successful, students should

perceive the program as useful and helpful.

Additionally, after eight weeks of student teaching, the student staff were asked to evaluate their first weeks of student teaching using the same questionaire mailed to former students. (Appendix A)

After completion of the implementation phase of the practicum, the data from the student teacher evaluative survey were analyzed and presented in this final practicum report. Evaluation by students experiencing the practicum was compared with the evaluation completed by the former student teachers and results are presented in narrative form and as numerical totals.

The success of the evaluation program as a whole was measured by item analysis and comparison of current student teachers with prior student teachers. It was predicted that the student teachers who experienced the orientation program would:

1. Be more likely to describe their confidence level during the first weeks of student teaching as average or above, rather than low or very low. Five out of eight students was considered to be an achievable level.
2. Be more positive in tone in open ended description of feelings during the first week. Success would be five out of eight students.
3. Report feeling "well prepared" to complete field practice at an average level or above. Four out of eight would be considered successful.

4. Indicate fewer areas where they have questions. An average of two fewer areas/student would be considered successful.
5. Be less likely to identify "expectations of the Master Teacher" as the item about which they would most like to know more. A 20% decrease in the mention of this item would be considered successful.

Student attendance patterns were tabulated from student sign-in sheets available from the past three years.

The small number of students involved in this practicum make significance levels of dubious value, but a positive trend should constitute encouragement. If the success rate of 75% per student was achieved, the orientation program will be continued in future semesters. Should this success level not be reached, careful attention will be paid to the suggestions for improvement made to the open ended questions and the orientation program revised accordingly.

The survey of other California Commmunity Colleges (Appendix C) yielded content information of use to this practicum. In its analyzed form, and when returned to other Community Colleges, this survey may help provide needed continuity to programs throughout California.

CHAPTER IV: SOLUTION STRATEGY

A. DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION OF POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The philosophy towards orientation of new students in the Solano Community College Laboratory Nursery School had, in the past, rested on the premise that student teachers were assigned to the laboratory nursery school on the same basis as students were assigned to community schools and that differentiating between these two groups by providing extra instruction would be inappropriate. However, once the laboratory school offered both a morning and an afternoon program, and essentially every student who desired laboratory school training could be accomodated, the careful non-distinction between laboratory training and community placement no longer seemed necessary. Indeed, the almost complete staff turnover each semester in the laboratory school was and is a problem few community schools must face and was deserving of Solano Community College faculty attention.

Although many other college laboratory nursery schools must face the same problem of high student staff turnover, their solutions to this problem, if any, have not found their way into the literature. Accordingly, part of this practicum consisted of a survey of the other California Community

Colleges with Early Childhood Education programs (Appendix C) to elicit their solutions and approaches to this problem. The impact of new staff each semester on an ongoing program is compounded by the presence on the same staff of persons who are concrete operational and those who are abstract in their thought.

Perhaps the most obvious solution to pursue would be to require the completion of some college classwork prior to enrollment in the field practice class (i.e., student teaching). This would necessitate a structural change in the Early Childhood Education program from a 1 year to a 1 1/2 year or 2 year program. This approach would allow students to complete at least a portion of the required Early Childhood Education curriculum classes prior to enrolling in field practice. While an excellent idea, making such structual changes in the program was not a possibility at the local college level, nor was it within the responsibility or authority of the author to propose such changes.

Nicholas (1976) in describing the successful orientation of college student teachers in an urban school district reported that orientation included a walking tour of the neighborhood and visit to a cultural arts center where the director shared future community plans with the students. This was bolstered by "specialists" sharing their area of expertise with the student teachers and with the inclusion of the children's parents in a tour and lunch. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Solano Community College serves all of Solano

County, but the immediate "neighborhood" is primarily pear orchard. The introduction of the student teachers to the parents is a good idea, one already accomplished by an introductory parent coffee held early in each semester. Would that we only had numerous specialists to call on as speakers!

Although not technically a preservice orientation technique, Martin (1976) suggested student/teacher contracts as a successful approach to the delineation of new role expectations. This would be an excellent suggestion for the teacher of the field practice class in which the student teachers are enrolled. This author, however, serves as the laboratory nursery school supervising teacher and has no responsiblity for grading the student teachers under her direction.

Holmes (1976) has suggested the use of simulations (role play activities) for orientation purposes. While his research did not find significant levels of difference in attitude change (as had been predicted), a valuable esprit d'corps was established and the students reported enjoying and benefiting from the experience. In this practicum, role play activities were added to the repertoire of supportive activities as discussed later in this chapter.

Although the educational literature was not especially productive in providing possible solutions, fortunately, this problem of frequent staff turnover and the frequent initiation of inexperienced staff is not unique to laboratory

nursery schools, but is a difficulty in many fields which experience a high turnover rate. The possible solutions gleaned from these other sources included a preceptorship program (Knauss, 1980; Everson et al, 1981; Patton, Grace, & Rocca, 1981), a paired mentor arrangement (Patton, Grace, & Rocca, 1981) wherein an experienced worker is assigned to assist a new employee on a one-to-one basis, and an individualized program including self-evaluation of skills (Moran, 1980).

Everson et al (1981) pointed to the problems caused by newly employed (recently trained) individuals being unable to meet job expectations without a lengthy "orientation / transition" period and spoke to the need for rapid and cost effective orientation of new staff to avoid high stress, staff burnout, and turnover. To achieve this, they suggested a series of knowledgeable, experienced persons acting as "preceptors" who assisted the new employee in planning a "learning contract" (diagnosing needs, setting learning objectives, and establishing strategies for learning and for evaluating). Everson et al (1981) also discussed the social integration of the new employee as a second major task and saw the preceptor, again, as the source of such information. Many of these components are of value and become usable in a laboratory school as the semester progresses. However, because of the inherent limitations of one Master Teacher acting as "preceptor" for up to eight untrained individuals rather than for one newly trained individual; this solution,

while showing a great promise for child care centers experiencing high turnover, lacks practicality for the Solano Community College situation.

A very interesting article by Patton, Grace, and Rocca (1981) described an orientation program which began with the job interview! In this unusual case, six new positions were being filled at the same time. An interview questionaire was developed to help achieve a balance of skills, attitudes, and behaviors in recognition that each new employee would bring "experiences, personal interests,and talent" (Patton, Grace, & Rocca, 1981, p. 28). This preemployment interview included the question "What special help would you like to have offered in an orientation program?" (Patton, Grace, & Rocca, 1981, p. 28), along with more traditional interview questions. The orientation program was then developed with the selected six particular individuals in mind. Beyond the use of the preceptorship suggested by Everson et al (1981) and discussed by Krauss (1980). Patton, Grace and Rocca (1981) also utilized a "buddy system" where each new employee was matched with a willing, experienced employee, primarily to ensure social interaction. Since students are assigned to the laboratory school without prior interview, this particular solution has little usefulness with the exception of the "buddy system." Although the staff is rarely closely balanced in numbers between first and second semester students, this might be a fruitful approach in a semester where the groups were equivalent in size.

Meisenhelder (1981) has pointed out that new employees with high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem and insight into their own coping mechanisms adjust more quickly and more successfully to the work environment. Meisenhelder (1981) promoted such adjustment with a written orientation program combined with close individual guidance and suggested a need for honest, accurate feedback combined with specific positive reinforcement. Although Meisenhelder's written orientation program was not directly applicable to the program at Solano Community College, the concept of using written materials in the orientation process was a valuable one and one which was adapted by this author to meet the specific needs in her work setting.

B. DESCRIPTION OF SELECTED SOLUTIONS

Informal questioning of the student teachers from the Spring semester, 1982, prior to the development of this practicum, elicited their requests for more basic information and more direction from the Master Teacher early in the semester. In light of this information, the best solution applicable to this particular setting seemed to be the development of a Solano Community College Laboratory Nursery School orientation program to be used at the start of each semester. This was combined with a planned series of continued supportive activities to ensure ongoing support and continuing orientation over the first six weeks of the

semester.

Orientation was accomplished through the following activities:

1. A group tour of the nursery school with focus on activity areas, storage, and procedures.
2. A visual/auditory presentation via an author prepared slide show (Appendix C) focusing on philosophy, procedures, schedules, and techniques.
3. Written presentation via handouts (Appendix E).
4. Social interaction during an introductory staff meeting.
5. A series of six weekly learning activities.
6. Continuing social support.

Two sources of information applicable to this orientation were the former students in the school and the other California Community College Early Childhood Education laboratory schools. Both were surveyed for information and for other creative solutions for this problem as a logical and potentially very helpful step in preparing the materials and methods for the chosen solution. Ideally this solution would result in an organized series of educational materials and activities to provide a comprehensive and supportive introduction to working as a student teacher in this laboratory school.

C. CALENDAR PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

The following schedule describes the development of materials for the orientation program to assist the incoming students in their new role as student teachers.

Preparation of these materials included the following steps:

I. Prepare, present, and evaluate a pilot orientation project in August, 1982. The composition consisted of:

A. A slide show presentation (Appendix D) including:

a. The daily schedule

b. The school philosophy

c. Suggested guidance techniques

B. A nursery school orientation folder (Appendix E) including:

a. A welcoming letter

b. A description of the program

c. Complete job descriptions for each assigned area with examples of children interacting with the materials where applicable

d. Suggested guidance techniques and school rules

e. A sample curriculum plan for the first week of school

f. A list of the children enrolled, their birthdates and ages

g. Assigned snack table and story group

assignment

h. A description of the math materials to be used

i. A sample standard alphabet

j. Note pad and pencil

C. Orientation group meeting offering:

a. A presentation / discussion by the Master Teacher

b. Group discussion and questioning

c. Supportive social interaction

II. Question former laboratory school student teachers via questionaire for their suggestions for the orientation program.

III. Survey other similar programs at other community colleges in California by questionnaire, interview, or phone survey.

IV. Compare and contrast the data collected from the on-campus laboratory school orientation evaluation with data collected from other similar schools. And, using the best ideas from each, rewrite the nursery school orientation program.

V. In January, 1983, present and evaluate the completed orientation program.

D. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN

The author's desire for the student staff of the fall semester, 1982, to experience the practicum preservice orientation presentation was primarily responsible for the decision to conduct a pilot project orientation prior to the planned survey of the other California Community Colleges and prior to the planned written survey of prior student teachers. Accordingly, the first versions of the student folder of materials (Appendix E), orientation slide show (Appendix D) and tour were presented in August, 1982, and students were asked to evaluate the orientation program in early September. From September to January, the slide show underwent considerable revision as new and more illustrative slides replaced the old, and new material was added, primarily in the area of philosophy and teacher - child interactions.

The survey of the other California Community Colleges (Appendix C) designed to elicit information about their preservice orientation programs was mailed in November with a request to be returned in early December. Should someone wish to duplicate this practicum in another state, this survey was the least successful part of the practicum. It was costly, time consuming, delay producing and, in the end, productive of very little useful information. In fact, the

response to the survey was disappointing in both quantity and quality. Followup phone calls elicited promises, but few additional returns. The author was pursuing a number of concerns simultaneously which relegated the questions of primary concern to her (i.e., questions of student teacher ability level and appropriate teaching techniques for each level) to page 3 of the 4 page survey. Perhaps partially for that reason, these questions were not responded to well. This difficulty will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 5.

Advice from this author to other survey users would be to avoid mail surveys of large numbers of people unless your employer will cover all or part of the cost. Rethink the "standard" advice to direct the letter of request to the "concerns" of the recepients; think instead about what questions you would like answered. Many of the questions included in the college survey were designed to help identify the other state programs most similar to the program at Solano Community College on the supposition that their solutions would be the most applicable to our situation. From the survey response our particular situation appears to be almost unique. Only one college reported a similar staffing situation. Additional advice would include paying attention to timing, use a longer lead time; an earlier mailing timed to arrive just after the first few weeks of the semester might have received more attention. A shorter, more tightly focused, survey would have helped. Finally, pay attention to detail: the addition of graphics, use of color,

the infusion (somehow) of some humor -- all may have increased the response rate.

During the same time period, survey instruments (Appendix A) were sent out to prior Solano Community College students. Here the response was more positive. Students seemed pleased to be asked to help, were generous in taking time to respond completely to the questions, and had helpful suggestions to offer. As a group, the prior student teachers perceived a preservice orientation program as a good idea -- something our program had lacked.

In January, 1983, on the first day of class, each student teacher was given a personalized blue and white Solano Community College folder containing the materials in Appendix E. They were each asked to read through the materials prior to the next day.

On the second day of class, the revised slide program was presented to the group, followed by a tour of the school and an introductory staff meeting. On request from a student, the slide show was shown again after the students had spent one week with the children. This change in the format worked well, it allowed for (perhaps encouraged) a more leisurely discussion. There were more comments and questions from students during the second showing of the slide show than during the first, and students reported that they "enjoyed it more" the second time and felt less overwhelmed with new information. One student commented "Now it makes sense."

One of the suggestions made by this author's practicum reviewer was to plan activities to extend the orientation program over the first six weeks of school. Although conceived originally as a "pre" service orientation, the tight time constraints imposed by the Solano Community College schedule combined with the self-evident need for continued support and encouragement for new staff, made this an excellent suggestion.

Because of the structure of the program at Solano Community College, the Master Teacher opens the school at 8:00 am, student teachers are expected to arrive by 8:30 and have the area for which they are responsible set up by 9:00. Between 8:00 and 8:30, the Master Teacher is available for consultation and advice and students often elect to arrive early, especially when they have a busy set up. The student teachers work from 8:30 to 12:30. The morning program is over at 11:30, most of the children leave at this time. Although some children remain for lunch, this schedule allows a brief clean up and a daily staff meeting of 30 - 45 minutes. During this staff meeting, the day is reviewed, both individual children and group behaviors are discussed; student teachers have the opportunity to ask questions and plans for the next week are made. Because these are important functions and contribute in and of themselves to developing a sense of staff cohesiveness, it was decided that adding one more formal activity each week (film, written assignment, role playing activity) along with establishing a

more "social" atmosphere in the staff meetings would meet the felt need for extension of the practicum implementation. Accordingly, a policy was initiated of having hot water available for instant coffee or tea during staff meetings, the author brought fruit, or a cheese and cracker tray from home, and encouraged the serving of school snack leftovers during the staff meeting. The student teachers picked up on this aspect of the meeting time also and throughout the semester once or twice a week, we enjoyed a variety of "special" snacks ranging from homemade cookies to spinach pie.

The formal activities added to the staff meetings included:

1. The second showing of the orientation slide show.
2. A film from High Scope, "Questions that Help Children Develop Their Ideas," PS 102, 7 minutes.
3. A written exercise based on affective feelings.
4. A presentation by the Master Teacher on control techniques including "I" messages.
5. Selected role play situations.

As previously discussed, the students had requested the repeat showing of the preorientation slide show and seemed to feel more relaxed and enjoy it more the second time around.

The film shown during the third week discussed language use with children. Although the film was in poor repair, the concepts shown were clear and easy for the students to

follow. Also during this week the High Scope film strip on the cognitively oriented curriculum was shown during the early morning period (due to time constraints on returns) providing a focus for that day's staff meeting on educational "models."

The Friday of the fourth week of school, the author asked each student to tell her how they felt about the day on paper, i.e., "How did the day go for you?" Interestingly enough, the continuing students who had already worked in the laboratory school for a semester shared their feelings (both positive and negative) freely as asked. The new students very politely wrote an "assignment for the teacher" which in each case glossed over problem areas and made more comments about the program than comments on their feelings. The author also learned that, just because the author had had a terrific day and felt the program "tone" was ideal, not every student teacher had had a good day. And, finally, some students took the opportunity to share information about the program and/or other teachers they probably would not have shared in the group session. This was definitely a valuable exercise, one worth using more often in the future.

During the fifth week, the plans called for a written exercise focusing on children and their behavior. However, there was a student request for discussion of "control" techniques. In response to this, we discussed group composition, how to analyze trends, stresses, and influences. The appropriate standard approaches to minimizing the need

for extraneous controls (i.e., using positive direction, establishing warm adult-child relationships, following a routine, having clear expectations, and following through on direction). We continued with second level responses (environmental and/or programic changes, schedule changes, one-on-one, redirection) and concluded with a discussion of "I" messages.

During the sixth week, role play situations were used. The Master Teacher provided the situations outlined in Appendix F. The students worked in groups of three and each student experienced each of the roles as outlined and then we rejoined to discuss the responses as a group.

The role play situations were experienced by the students as the most threatening activity of the semester. The staff was split between those who felt it was a valuable learning experience -- one they would like to repeat and those who felt overwhelmed and discouraged. In future semesters, the author would recommend a graded series of role play situations, beginning perhaps with more neutral, less confrontative situations and building gradually towards more challenging situations.

At the conclusion of the formal orientation implementation period (the supportive staff meetings, snacks, role play activities and occasional "special" events continued throughout the semester), students were asked to evaluate the orientation program (Appendix B) and later in the semester asked retrospectively to remember their feelings

during the first week of school in an attempt to compare their confidence level with that of prior students.

CHAPTER V: RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Results

This practicum was designed to reduce laboratory school staffing difficulties caused by high student teacher turn over in an ongoing program early in each semester. The method chosen for solution of this problem was the development of a preservice orientation program to be presented to students prior to their initial day with children, extended with supportive activities during the first six weeks of school. The content for the orientation program was derived from three sources. First, the observation of the Master Teacher, over several years, of gaps in student information; second, from a survey of prior student teachers who had completed their student teaching in the laboratory school; and, last, from a survey of the other community colleges in California used to solicit their suggestions for effective orientation programs.

The author of this practicum had been concerned for some time with the effect of the high staff turnover rate on the children enrolled in the laboratory school. As is true in any school, the manner and tone of the school is a reflection of the personality of the staff. When the staff consists of

a random cross section of students, wide fluctuations in manner can and do occur from semester to semester. The presentation to each new staff of information on school procedures and basic philosophy prior to their contact with children seemed an essential step to take.

In order to help determine the content of the information to be shared, the former student teachers were surveyed (Appendix A) as to their affective response to their first few weeks of student teaching as well as queried as to areas about which they would have liked to have more information prior to the first day of student teaching. (Table 1)

Another source of information for the orientation program was a survey of the other Community College Early Childhood Education programs in California. Of the 99 surveys mailed (colleges known not to have Early Childhood Education Programs were not included), 42 surveys were returned (a 42% return rate). Since fewer than half of the colleges surveyed responded to the survey and fewer still had materials they were willing to share (10 colleges -- 10% -- sent materials), it is difficult to make definitive statements about Early Childhood Education Laboratory Nursery School orientation programs in California. However, virtually every college which completed the form requested copies of the results of the survey, indicating a felt need by some college faculty for additional information in this area.

The orientation materials provided by the ten colleges which were gracious enough to do so, ranged from a simple one page (of course requirement procedures) or two pages (outlining the schedule of the day and providing a short list of guidelines for students) to handbooks ranging from nine to 18 pages in length detailing job descriptions, expectations of students, rules for children and descriptions of learning areas. Several schools used a series of handouts rather than a single handbook. Handouts included college course descriptions, schedules, assignments, lesson plan forms, and summaries of the developmental stages.

The author was most impressed by the diversity of the materials, both in tone and in content. Overall, the materials were matter of fact, if not highly directive, and so diverse as to make it difficult to find a single characteristic they all had in common.

Although high staff turnover is a crucial concern for Solano Community College where there is only one paid employee per group of children, only one other college returning the survey form follows this pattern. When the survey responses were analyzed, it became evident that many schools avoided part of the stress of new, inexperienced student staff in the laboratory school by the use of two major mechanisms. The most popular solution of the other community colleges has been to staff their laboratory schools with paid individuals at a higher ratio than that at Solano Community College. With two or three (or more!) paid staff

per group, the problems of continuity evident at Solano Community College are avoided. Thirty-two of the California community colleges have campus laboratory schools (or campus day care centers where Early Childhood Education students are placed) which are staffed by two or more paid staff members. Of the remaining schools responding to the survey, one school declined to answer the questions on staffing, one was primarily a parent cooperative (where students were also placed), one was similar to the Solano Community College situation, and the remaining seven schools reported no on-campus centers. These community colleges can afford such high staffing ratios because these employees are considered college staff rather than faculty and are paid at a lower rate than faculty. In contrast, at Solano Community College, the lone instructor is a tenured faculty member.

A second popular solution, one often used in conjunction with the first, was to require completion of some classwork prior to enrollment in field practice. Of the responding colleges, 26 report that they require classwork prior to student teaching. Only eight of the colleges responding to the survey report no classes are required prior to field practice enrollment, as is true at Solano Community College. The number of prior units required varies from three units (six colleges) up to six plus units (12 colleges), with the balance requiring four to six units. The majority of the colleges with an on-campus program report providing some kind of orientation program to help students newly placed in the

center/laboratory school. College responses to this question varied from those which said "Yes, we have an orientation program as part of lecture class" to those who said, "No, no orientation program because students are instructed in lecture." For the purposes of scoring, only those schools which provided a formal orientation program in addition to the required Early Childhood Education classes were considered to have an orientation program. Twenty-two of the 42 colleges responding to the survey provide some kind of an orientation program. Tables 2, 3, and 4 describe the programs that are offered. The majority of the orientation programs are over an hour in length, only five are an hour or less. The content varies widely as can be seen by perusal of Table 2. The most popular content items include the "center and environment," "schedule and/or routine," "student responsibilities," and "introduction of staff." These were all included in five or more orientation programs.

TABLE 2
Orientation Programs
California Community Colleges Laboratory School
(or On Campus Children's Center)

Length of Orientation Program	# of Colleges
> 15 min	0
16-30 min	2
31-60 min	3
1- 2 hrs	12
> 2 hrs	6

TABLE 3

Orientation Programs

California Community Colleges Laboratory School
(or On Campus Children's Center)

Content Description	# of Colleges Including this Content
Program	4
Center environment (Physical plant)	9
Schedules (routines)	6
Preparation & planning	1
Policies	2
Tips on working with children (guidelines)	2
Curriculum	1
Philosophy	3
Growth & development (what children of this age are like)	1
Procedures	2
Individual children	1
Student responsibilities (duties)	5
Hands-on-materials	1
Goals for children	1
Teacher competencies	1
Staff introduction	5
Question & answer	2
Center rules	3
Appropriate language	1
Observation of program	2

The format of orientation programs utilized by California Community Colleges is summarized in Table 4.

TABLE 4
Orientation Programs
California Community Colleges Laboratory School
(or On Campus Children's Center)

Orientation Program Format	# of Colleges with Format
Handbook	8
Handouts	19
Slides	10
Charts	3
Videotape	1
Tour of center	2
Social period	1
Treasure hunt to familarize students with facility	1
Demonstration of materials	1

Handbooks, handouts, and slide presentations were popular components. Demonstrations, tours, charts, and videotapes were used infrequently. Six schools recommended commercial materials for orientation purposes. (Appendix G)

Each college was asked to identify orientation activities which seemed particularly successful with their students who were below average in intellectual ability and those which seemed particularly successful with students who were above average in intellectual ability. Complete responses to these questions are tabulated in Appendix H. These two questions seemed particularly difficult for the

respondents to answer. Twenty-one (21%) left the questions blank, an additional four respondents (4%) did not differentiate between the two questions, one commented that all students were treated alike, one that they were not aware of ability levels, and two respondents made identical suggestions to both questions. When the responses of those nine respondents who made differing suggestions in the two categories were examined, it became clear that individual help and extra instruction is perceived to be needed by the below average students. This was expressed as the need for individual consultation, one-to-one counseling, individual conferences, modeling, etc. Terms such as "step by step" or "on the job training" were used in description. In contrast, the above average students were perceived to benefit from more independence -- "suggested reading," "extended opportunities to prepare and implement projects," and the opportunity to question and evaluate both themselves and other programs.

The students experiencing the Preservice Orientation Program and the six weeks of extended activities as outlined in Chapter 4 were then asked to comment in a formal way (Appendix B) on the usefulness and value of the orientation for themselves. Meeting the goals of increased student confidence and lessened anxiety were assessed by the following criteria:

1. The students' responses to the evaluation instrument for the preservice orientation (Appendix B) was used to evaluate their satisfaction with the orientation program and with their initial preparation for student teaching. A rating of 75% overall positive responses at the "agree" or "strongly agree" level for each student was used as the criteria for success. Questions tallied were those specifically evaluative of the value of the orientation program as perceived by the student (A1, A4, A6, A8, A9, B1, C1, C4, C6).

Six of seven students responded to these key questions at the "agree" or "strongly agree" level 100% of the time. The seventh student recorded an "uncertain" response on one question, giving her a positive response rate of 8/9 (88%). This indication of satisfaction with the orientation program considerably exceeds the hoped for 75% positive response rate. Part of this high level of satisfaction may be explained by this particular group of students feeling

"special" because of the orientation program and this author's high interest level in the response to the orientation. It would be interesting to resurvey students in a year or two (after the orientation program has become "institutionalized" and a standard part of the program for student teachers) to see if this very high level of satisfaction persists. This author's expectation would be that the degree of positivity would decline somewhat.

2. A second measure was the expectation that subsequent to the preservice orientation and concurrently with the six weeks of continuing supportive activities, the student teachers would show a serious and responsible attitude toward their student teaching which would be reflected in regular attendance.

TABLE 5

Staff Attendance

Staff Number	Semester	Total Days Missed During the First Six Weeks of School
7	SP 83	3 absences (0.429/student)
8	FALL 82	6 absences (0.750/student)
7	SP 82	8 absences (1.143/student)
8	FALL 81	9 absences (1.268/student)
4*	SP 81	5 absences (1.250/student)
8*	FALL 80	16 absences (2.000/student)
6	SP 80	7 absences (1.167/student)
7	FALL 79	13 absences (1.857/student)

*Author did not serve as Master Teacher during this school year.

Complete attendance records were not available for prior semesters.

In comparing the attendance of the Spring 1983 student staff with the prior semesters' student staff attendance during the first six weeks of school, it can be easily seen that the absences during the experimental period were the lowest of any six week period in the prior three years. The average number of absences per student for the seven prior semesters was 1.348, hence there was a decline during the preservice orientation period of 0.919 absences per student or 68%, and conversely the improvement in attendance between 0.429 and 1.348 represents an increase of 214%. Compared to the previous low absence rate of 0.750, the Spring 1983 preservice orientation period rate of 0.429 was 43% lower, or an improvement of 75%.

Attendance during the Spring 1983 was 207/210 possible days or 98.6%, compared to the prior seven semesters' attendance of 1376/1440 possible days or 95.6%. This represents a 3% increase in attendance (significant by chi square testing at the $p<.05$ level); or in other words, 1.4% of days were missed in the Spring 1983 semester and 4.4% of days were missed during the prior seven semesters. There was, therefore, a 214% decrease ((4.4 - 1.4)/1.4)) in per centage of days missed. Thus the expectation of a significant ($p<.05$) increase in attendance was met.

3.

It was predicted that students would complete their commitment to the laboratory nursery school by not dropping

out of the field practice class. The criterion of success was 100% retention during the first six weeks of the semester. This criterion was met, all of the seven students who enrolled for student teaching in the Morning Laboratory Nursery School during the Spring 1983 semester continued through the first six weeks and, in fact, through the entire semester. In contrast, in the seven prior semesters where complete attendance records were maintained, a total of five students dropped out during the first six weeks of school.

4.

The general goal of increasing student teacher self-confidence and reducing anxiety through the Pre-service Orientation Program was evaluated by an item analysis of specific questions on the preservice evaluation instrument (Appendix B).

A. It was predicted that after the Pre-service Orientation Program, student teachers would see teaching young children as an "achievable skill they expected to learn." A total of six out of eight students indicating that they "agree" or "strongly agree" with this item (A5) was the established criterion of success. Of the total of seven students who enrolled during the Spring 1983 semester, three students marked "strongly agree," two marked "agree" and two students indicated they were uncertain. One of the students responding "uncertain" wrote in "a skill to learn and also a 'feeling for'." This item therefore failed to meet the criterion for success. A

related item, however, "I can tell I am learning specific skills that will be helpful to me as a teacher" was answered by all seven students at the "agree" or "strongly agree" level. The expectation that students would feel comfortable asking the Master Teacher for help/advice was evaluated by response to questions: C4. "The opportunity to ask questions is very helpful to me;" C6, "Specific suggestions from Doyleen (the Master Teacher) that relate to today's school day are helpful;" and C7, "Sometimes I feel criticized during staff meetings.

Responses to C4 and C6 were similar, all seven students were in agreement that the opportunity to ask questions was helpful and that specific suggestions from Doyleen (the Master Teacher) were helpful. The attempt to measure the level of trust and degree of comfort by asking about feelings of being criticized was less successful, five students did not feel criticized during staff meetings, one student indicated that she was "uncertain" and one student agreed that she sometimes felt criticized and added this note: "But that's okay, it gives me valuable insights on other (sic) way I could have handled something. I don't consider it a personal criticism." This author works hard to direct student teachers in positive ways and to reassure students that initial errors are expectable, understandable, and make wonderful learning experiences. Therefore, the response to this question, while disappointing, is an important reminder

of the essential quality of positive support when training new teachers.

In a self-directed, responsible environment, other students become an important source of learning also. It was hoped that the students would see the other student teachers as a supportive, helpful group of resources and that they would see themselves as a helpful source for other students. This was assessed by the answers to C1, "Daily staff meetings are useful to me;" C2, "I enjoy most the opportunity to talk with the other student teachers;" and C8, "I feel comfortable offering suggestions to other students." Although all the students agreed that they enjoyed the opportunity to talk to other students and found the daily staff meetings useful, only three students reported that they felt comfortable offering suggestions to other students. The other four students indicated that they felt "uncertain" about this. In light of the author's observation that this was an unusually supportive and helpful group of students who displayed a high rate of comments, suggestions, and direct offers of assistance, I think the selection of "uncertain" indicates a high sensitivity to the feelings of others and a perception of and reluctance to offer advice which might imply criticism or give offense in other ways.

In addition to the analysis of specific items which have been summarized above, students were asked to respond with additional comments and suggestions. Suggestions ranged from the completely impractical ("Provide a photo of each child in

the folders to go long with their name and birthday to make it easier to follow.") to helpful and useful ("Setting up the school together helped as much as the tour").

At a later time in the semester, the students who had experienced the Preservice Orientation Program and who had evaluated that orientation were asked to complete the same survey previously completed by the prior student teachers. (Appendix A) It had been anticipated that after experiencing the orientation program, the student teachers would be more likely to describe their confidence level as average or above. However, the pattern of responses could not be described as highly different from that of the prior students. All of the seven students responding to the survey described their confidence as average or below. It was predicted that students experiencing the orientation program would be more positive in tone in open ended description of their feelings. When asked to describe their feelings, three students described themselves as "anxious," others as "uncomfortable," "not confident," "unsure," and/or "worried." Three students also described themselves as "excited," two as "happy," and one as "delighted with the children." Four out of eight students were expected to report feeling prepared to complete field practice at an average level or above. This criterion was met. Two felt "well prepared" to complete field practice, while three felt their preparation was average and two said not well prepared. Again those who had prior Early Childhood Education classes felt better prepared.

Again, most of the students found their co-student teachers either "pleasant" or "friendly." One student initially found the other students to be "alien." (This was not one of the provided categories.) When asked if their feelings had changed at all, three students reported feeling more friendly, three reported "No" (in each case they had already designated the other students as "friendly"), and one reported "less alien."

All seven students found the Master Teacher to be either "pleasant" or "friendly." Five students felt their feelings towards the Master Teacher became "more friendly." One reported "no change," and one indicated "other" and wrote in "I still find her friendly and like her, but I find myself trying too hard to please her."

Tables 6 and 7 compare the choices of information about which students would have liked to know more. It was anticipated that the student teachers who experienced the orientation program would have fewer questions. The former student teachers indicated a desire for more information in the average of 5.6 categories each. The Spring semester 1983 students had questions in an average of only three categories each. This meets the criterion of two fewer categories/student. Also, a slightly different pattern of choices emerges. The "goals of the school" was selected by four of seven students, while expectations of the Master Teacher was selected by only two out of seven, in contrast to 14 of 19 prior students. This is a 44.8% decrease in mention

of this item, meeting the criterion established of an expected 20% decrease.

TABLE 6

Former Student Teacher Information Requests

Q: What kinds of things would you have liked to know more about before your Laboratory Nursery School staffing began? (Mark an "X" in all those that apply to you)

	# of Responses (# Responding "Would Have Helped the Most" in Parentheses)	
	Former Student Teachers N=19	Spring 1983 Student Teachers N=7
A. School schedule	5 (1)	0 (0)
B. Where things are stored in the school	7 (1)	2 (1)
C. How to use nursery school equipment	4 (1)	3 (3)
D. What are the goals of the school	13 (4)	4 (1)
E. Student work hours	1 (0)	0 (0)
F. Student responsibilities	10 (4)	3 (1)
G. Student weekly assignments	6 (2)	1 (1)
H. Know the other student teachers better	7 (1)	0 (0)
I. What children of this age are like	5 (1)	1 (0)
J. Who the children are	6 (0)	2 (0)
K. More about individual children	10 (4)	1 (1)
L. How to talk to the children	10 (2)	2 (1)
M. The instructor	3 (0)	0 (0)
N. Expectations of the Master Teacher	14 (6)	2 (2)
O. Other (please explain)	6 (0)	0 (0)

TABLE 7

Former Student Teacher Information Requests
Written Responses to "O"

Prior Student Teachers --

"Feelings, my confidence grew once I realized other student teachers had similar feelings."
"Student teacher evaluation."
"More about Head Teacher week."
"Philosophy of the Master Teacher and teacher - child relationships."
"Testing of children and parent conferences."
"More about each area of the school."

Spring 1983 Student Teachers --

"I think the folder you gave us answered most of the questions really well. I think I learned more about the children by working with them and during the staff meetings than I think I would have done if I heard about the children before I met them."
"Knowing the motives behind the answers to my questions would make more sense to me."
"The information that was given us at the beginning of the semester was very useful. But, I always have more questions."

B. Conclusions

If the survey response from the California Community Colleges to the survey (Appendix C) is an accurate indicator, the implications of the effects of high staff turnover on laboratory nursery schools is not a high priority concern for the California Community Colleges. When the written materials these colleges provided to students were analyzed, it was apparent that the majority of the schools who returned the survey had focused primarily on the informational content needs of their students, at least, in the printed material

provided to them. Survey responses revealed little attention paid to the affective support needed for optimum student growth. Only nine colleges were aware of the differing needs of low ability vs high ability students. Interestingly enough, the 79% response rate of the prior student teachers to their survey concerning an orientation program for incoming students indicates an interest in and a felt need for preparation. The students seemingly had clear recollections of their feelings during the first weeks of school. The length of the written responses and the descriptive terms used indicate the freshness and impact of this experience for them, even though in some cases it had been several years since the experience.

The reported results section indicate clearly that the orientation program helped to define the new experience for the students. It gave them needed information and they each felt it was useful, helpful and should be used for future students. Their anxiety level and feelings of inadequacy were still very high during the first weeks of school, an important reminder of the stressfulness of this (and perhaps any) new job. Although the goal of reducing anxiety was not met, this staff worked exceptionally well together. A real "group" feeling developed along with genuine concern for each member of the group as a person and as an individual.

C. Recommendations

The implications of the work reported in this practicum are broader than the rather narrow problem of high student staff turnover in laboratory schools. Although laboratory schools and community schools vary in many respects, the problems engendered by high staff turnover are common to both and the diminuation in quality of program for the children and in quality of the "social" work experience for the staff are difficulties which have not received sufficient attention in the field. The quality of many programs could be measurably improved by attention to the social and informational needs of new staff members.

The format for any orientation program should fit the particular needs of the program as well as the specific needs of the orientee for information and support. The importance of the affective support component cannot be overemphasized and it applies to orientees across the entire ability range. In addition, concrete operational thinkers are in need of visual material, literal information, and much support in setup techniques and manner, while abstract thinkers will want to know "why" as well as "how" things are done and will appreciate more autonomy.

Although strength often lies in diversity, the ability to speak with a united voice and with a history of common

concerns and common goals is important and well worth pursuing. In light of this, although the survey of other community colleges was disappointing for this practicum, I would recommend its inclusion in any duplication attempt with the previously mentioned (Chapter 4) cautions as to contents, timing, and format.

D. Dissemination

Selected sections of this final practicum report will be returned this fall to the community colleges which expressed a desire for this material.

The material on methodology for reducing staff turnover through orientation techniques will be shared with the Solano Chapter of the Association for the Education of Young Children and (if accepted) presented in a workshop format at the California State Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference in the Spring of 1984.

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APPENDIX A

Solano Community College
Laboratory Nursery School
P.O. Box 246
Suisun City, CA 94585
November 15, 1982

Dear

This letter is directed to all of you who have completed all or some of your field practice in the Solano College Laboratory Nursery School under my direction.

As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance the Solano Community College Nursery School, an orientation program is being planned to help give our new student teachers a better start. If this program is successful, it should minimize some of the effects of high staff turnover on program quality and make the Laboratory Nursery School a better experience for both children and student teachers.

As a former student teacher in the school, you are an ideal source of suggestions for such an orientation program. I am asking your help to pinpoint those aspects of your laboratory school experience in the first week or two of school upon which improvements could be made and, also, to help by remembering your feelings during those first few weeks. If you still have your journal from your first semester of field practice, rereading the first several entries should bring it all back to life. All replies will be held confidential, there is no need to identify yourself unless you so wish, although I would love to hear from all of you.

It would be very much appreciated if you could complete the enclosed form and return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope by December 5, so that other aspects of this study can go forward. With your help, we can plan a program in which we can all take pride.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Doyleen McMurtry

SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE LABORATORY NURSERY SCHOOL

FORMER STUDENT TEACHER SURVEY

1. Please answer the first few questions "YES" or "NO" by circling the appropriate ( ).

(YES) (NO) While at Solano College, were you a full-time student (12 units or more each semester)?

(YES) (NO) Did you or will you complete an ECE certificate program?

(YES) (NO) Did you or will you complete an A.S. degree with the ECE certificate?

(YES) (NO) Did you transfer to a four year college for further work?

(YES) (NO) If "yes," will your major field will continue to be ECE?
If "no," please indicate your new choice of major.

Please check the answer that applies:

While at Solano Community College, would you describe yourself as:

"straight 'A'" student	( )
"A-/B+" student	( )
"B" student	( )
"B-/C+" student	( )
"C" student	( )
less than "C" student	( )

2. At what point in your college career did you begin your field practice in the Laboratory Nursery School? (please "X" the appropriate space.)

During my first semester in ECE.	( )
During my second semester in ECE.	( )
During my third semester in ECE.	( )
Other.	( )

Please explain "other"

The next few questions are about your first experiences while you were a student teacher. On the following questions, please circle the response closest to your answer.

3. As you faced your first week of student teaching, how would you best describe your confidence level?

(very low) (low) (aver.) (high) (very high)

In your own words, how would you describe your feelings during those first weeks of school (ie., happy, sad, anxious, scared, etc.)

---

4. Did you feel well prepared to complete your field practice experience during those first few weeks?

(no) (somewhat) (aver.) (well) (very well prepared)

5. At that time, how did you see your co-student teachers?

(unfriendly) (reserved) (aver.) (pleasant) (friendly)

6. (YES) (NO) Did your feelings toward your fellow student teachers change at all?

How did they change?
( ) Became less friendly
( ) Became more friendly
( ) Other -- Please explain if you answered "other."

---

7. At that time, during the first weeks of your first semester, did your Master Teacher seem

(unfriendly) (reserved) (aver.) (pleasant) (friendly)

8. (YES) (NO) Did your feelings toward your Master Teacher change during the semester?

How did they change?
( ) Became less friendly
( ) Became more friendly
( ) Other -- Please explain if you answered "other."

---

9. During your first several weeks as a student teacher, did you have questions about how the school would be run?

(none) (few) (several) (some) (many)

10. If you had questions, were they mostly concerned with one area or were they spread over a wide area of concerns?

(one area) (several areas)

11. How often were your questions answered?

(never) (seldom) (sometimes) (usually) (always)

12. What kinds of things would you have like to know more about before your Laboratory Nursery School staffing began? (mark an "X" in all those that apply to you)

( )A. school schedule
( )B. where things are stored in the school
( )C. how to use nursery school equipment
( )D. what are the goals of the school
( )E. student work hours
( )F. student responsibilities
( )G. student weekly assignments
( )H. know the other student teachers better
( )I. what children of this age are like
( )J. who the children are
( )K. more about individual children
( )L. how to talk to the children
( )M. the instructor
( )N. expectations of the Master Teacher
( )O. other (please explain)

_____

_____

_____

13. For yourself, which of the above items (in #12) would have helped you THE MOST during that first week of school?

_____

_____

_____

14. If another beginning student asked your advice, about student teaching in the S.C.C. Laboratory Nursery School, what would you tell them?

_____

_____

_____

Again, thank you for taking the time to complete this form! I look forward to your replies.

Sincerely,

Doyleen McMurtry

APPENDIX B

SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE LABORATORY NURSERY SCHOOL

NURSERY SCHOOL STUDENT TEACHER ORIENTATION

Evaluation Survey

During your first week of student teaching in the Solano College Nursery School you were given a packet of materials, attended your first staff meeting, took a tour of the school, and were shown a slide show. All of these materials and activities were intended to help you feel comfortable with your student teaching assignment. Now, I'm very interested in finding out what was helpful and what was not useful; and, also, am asking you for suggestions to help students in the future. Please answer as completely and as honestly as you can. Feel free to explain your answers or to answer questions I have not asked.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO IDENTIFY YOURSELF

PLEASE ANSWER BY CIRCLING HOW STRONGLY YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS.

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNCERTAIN	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
A. ORIENTATION FOLDER					
1. The Folder of Introductory Materials is a useful idea for future students.	SD	D	U	A	SA
2. The materials included were difficult to read and understand.	SD	D	U	A	SA
3. Too many different materials were included in the folder.	SD	D	U	A	SA
4. The introductory letter included in the folder was helpful and friendly.	SD	D	U	A	SA
5. Teaching is a skill I can learn.	SD	D	U	A	SA
6. The Job description cards are useful to follow each week.	SD	D	U	A	SA

7. The Job assignments on the cards are easy for me to understand.

SD D U A SA

8. The first week's lesson plan helped me understand the way the curriculum is organized.

SD D U A SA

9. The page of suggestions and rules of the school helped me.

SD D U A SA

10. I would have liked more materials in the folder.

SD D U A SA

B. SLIDE SHOW

1. The slide show should be shown to beginning students in the future.

SD D U A SA

2. The slide show was too long.

SD D U A SA

3. Additional information should be added to the slide show to make it more complete.

SD D U A SA

4. I understood most of the teaching techniques discussed in the slide show.

SD D U A SA

5. I learned a lot about teaching young children by watching the slide show.

SD D U A SA

C. DAILY STAFF MEETINGS

1. The daily staff meetings are useful to me.

SD D U A SA

2. I enjoy most the opportunity to talk with the other student teachers.

SD D U A SA

3. Staff discussions of helpful suggestions don't always translate in working directly with children.

SD D U A SA

4. The opportunity to ask questions is very helpful to me.

SD D U A SA

5. During staff meetings, specific problems and their solutions are explored.

SD D U A SA

6. Specific suggestions from Doreen that relate to today's school day are helpful.

SD D U A SA

7. Sometimes I feel criticized during staff meetings.

SD D U A SA

8. I feel comfortable offering suggestions to other students.

SD D U A SA

9. I can tell that I am learning specific skills that will be helpful to me as a teacher.

SD D U A SA

10. I would have liked to have more information presented during the first staff meeting.

SD D U A SA

D. ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Do you have any comments about or suggestions for additional materials to include in the folder?

2. How could the first staff meeting be improved? Should any additional information be included?

3. How do you feel about your first day with the children? Could your preparation have been improved? Please give any suggestions.

4. Did the tour of the school help? Could it be improved?

5. Are there any areas not covered by the slide show that you would recommend including for future students?

6. Any additional comments?

APPENDIX C

Solano Community College
Laboratory Nursery School
P.O. Box 246
Suisun City, CA 94585

October 19, 1982

NAME

COLLEGE

ADDRESS

Dear

The attached survey is concerned with preservice orientation programs/procedures for field practice students in California Community College Early Childhood Education Programs. As you know from the recent study conducted by the Chancellor's Office, Community College child development programs and laboratory nursery schools follow many models and have many different staffing patterns.

On-campus children's programs, whether designated as laboratory schools or campus day care centers, are usually excellent environments for children and can provide the best training facility for early childhood education students. However, our programs are vulnerable to charges of elitism and unrealistic training from community schools desiring volunteer assistance from students. In this period of declining economic support for education in general,

on-campus preschool student teacher placements need to be clearly and unequivocally a richer, more meaningful and more immediately skill related experience than the alternative community placement.

I am in the process of developing a student orientation program for entering students at Solano Community College and am interested in finding out how other schools orient their new students to their on-campus programs. It would be greatly appreciated if you would complete the enclosed form by December 1, 1982, and return it to me in the stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed. I look forward to sharing the results with those of you who are interested in receiving them. If you would like a copy of the summary and/or a description of the orientation program stemming from the survey, please check the box provided on the last page of the survey.

In the event that you are not the appropriate person to whom this letter should be directed in your program, it would be most appreciated if you would forward this survey to the correct person.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Doyleen McMurtry
Master Teacher
Solano College Laboratory Nursery School
Solano Community College

SURVEY -- ORIENTATION PROGRAMS FOR
ON-CAMPUS FIELD PRACTICE PLACEMENTS

1. Approximately how many ECE certificates are awarded at your campus each year?

under 20 ( )
20-30 ( )
31-40 ( )
41-50 ( )
51-75 ( )
over 75 ( )

2. How many on-campus placements of field practice students can be made each year?

1- 5 ( )
6-10 ( )
11-15 ( )
16-20 ( )
21-30 ( )
over 30 ( )

3. How many hours a week does each student spend in the on-campus center?

under 5 ( )
5- 9 ( )
10-14 ( )
15-19 ( )
20 ( )
over 20 ( )

4. How are student teachers assigned to your laboratory school (on-campus center)?

Random assignment ( )
On their request ( )
Pass exam/test/interview ( )
Pass introductory class ( )
Pass introductory class with a particular grade?
Grade A ( )
Grade B ( )
Grade C ( )
Grade D ( )
Other ( )
Please explain if "other" checked.

---

5. Once a student is placed in the on-campus center, will s/he complete all of her/his field practice

(YES) (NO) In the same center.
(YES) (NO) In a second center.
(YES) (NO) In a variety of schools.

6. Are students REQUIRED to take any classes prior to enrollment in field practice?

Yes
- 1-2 units ( )
- 3 units ( )
- 4-6 units ( )
- 6+ units ( )

No ( )

If "yes," please indicate names of courses and unit value:

---

7. What would you estimate the intellectual ability range of your laboratory school field practice students to be, compared to the general population?

- above average ( )
- average and above ( )
- about average ( )
- average and below ( )
- below average ( )
- from below average to above average ( )

8. (YES) (NO) Do you now have an orientation program for students assigned to your on-campus center?

9. How long does this orientation program take?

- less than 15 minutes ( )
- 16-30 minutes ( )
- 31-60 minutes ( )
- 1- 2 hours ( )
- over 2 hours ( )

10. How would you describe your present preservice orientation program (briefly)?

Is this done

- In class ( )
- At the center ( )
- Other (where?) ( )

---

11. (YES) (NO) are handouts included?
(YES) (NO) audio visual materials?
If "yes," please give TITLE AND SOURCE

(YES) (NO) slides?
(YES) (NO) charts?
(YES) (NO) other?
If "other," please identify

(YES) (NO) Can you recommend any commercial materials?
If "yes," please give TITLE and SOURCE.

---

12. (YES) (NO) Do you have copies of your locally prepared materials you are willing to share?
If "yes," please include in the stamped return envelope.

13. Are there any orientation activities which seem particularly successful with your students who are below average in intellectual ability?

---

14. Are there any orientation activities which seem particularly successful with your students who are above average in intellectual ability?

THANK YOU -- JUST A FEW QUESTIONS MORE

NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING FORM

POSITION/JOB TITLE ---

SCHOOL ADDRESS ---

(YES) (NO) Would you also be willing to participate in a phone interview about your program?

TELEPHONE NUMBER ---

Would you like copies of this survey's results?

1. ( ) Yes, a copy of the survey results.
2. ( ) Yes, materials developed from the student survey.

Size of the on-campus center(s).

1. Name(s) of your on-campus program(s) where student teachers are placed?

---

2. How many children are served daily?

---

3. Number of student teachers placed in center(s)?

---

4. Number of paid (non-student) staff?

---

5. The paid staff's level of training? (Please indicate number in each category)

Children's Center Permit	( )
AA Degree	( )
BA/BS Degree	( )
MA/MS Degree	( )
Doctoral Degree	( )
Other (please specify)	( )

Again, thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX D

SLIDE PRESENTATION

PRESERVICE ORIENTATION

SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

LABORATORY NURSERY SCHOOL

BY DOYLEEN MCMURTRY

1. This slide show is a photographic tour through a typical day here in the Morning Nursery School at Solano Community College.

2. You may be wondering what you are doing here. This slide show will give you an idea of the activities, materials, and daily schedule as well as some idea of what the teachers do and the underlying philosophy of the school.

3. As the slides are presented, watch for the role of the teacher in each area.

4. Keep in mind that the child is always more important than the activity and

5. positive teacher - child relationships are more important than the program.

6. Each day at nursery school, when the children arrive at the school, they are greeted at the door by the Head Teacher

7. and helped to find their name tags. In schools like this one, where name tags are used faithfully, children learn quite painlessly to recognize their own written names and very often by the end of the year begin to read the other children's names, also. The teacher can help this process along by helping children "sound out" the names which look like theirs.

8. The children hang up their own coats in their own locker marked with their name and their picture. The picture is important because at first all those names look alike! During this first week of school, we'll be taking a Polaroid picture of each child.

9. Having a special place of your own at school is important to each child's self-esteem as well as his self-confidence. The lockers are also the place where you will put the children's art work for them to take home.

10. Student Teachers have a special place for their things, too. This closet in the far corner of the nursery school library has a place for your coats and a shelf for your books.

11. When we have special materials for our morning group, we keep them here on the A.M. shelf.

12. Most children of preschool age will need SOME help with SOME items of clothing. Teachers will help children be as independent in this area as they can be, but will offer help gladly if needed.

13. All conversing with children should be done at the CHILD'S eye level. This teacher is crouched at the child's level to effectively discuss a problem.

14. When the children arrive, the school will be clean, fresh and inviting, with a variety of activities set up from which the children can choose.

15. When children self-select an activity, they are the most likely to enjoy and learn from it.

16. The entire first hour of school from 9:00 - 10:05 is our self-selected activity period. During this period,

17. the school offers a wide variety of experiences which encourage social, emotional, mental, physical and creative development for each child.

18. Our daily activities during this hour include: a special table for math activities which you see here.

19. Early in the year we will be working on sorting and categorization.

20. Measurements of all kinds are part of the math experience appropriate for preschoolers.

21. More formal activities will be added as the year progresses, but always as a free choice activity.

22. The student teacher in charge of this area will be asked to keep a record of the children who use the material.

23. Our library room is available for manipulative activities which

24. promote small motor development as well as help develop preceptual judgement.

25. The student teacher assigned to the library is also available for extra story reading during the day.

26. The children here are working on their own books titled, "ALL ABOUT ME." This type of activity is related to later reading. It encourages the use of language as well as self-awareness and creativity.

27. Creative art projects of all kinds such as fingerpainting

28. easel painting

29. crayons, scissors and pasting

30. and play dough are popular and important parts of the curriculum.

31. During this daily art experience, children learn how to make decisions

32. and how to plan ahead

33. as well as developing feelings of competency and pride in their own unique abilities.

34. Some people like to watch first...

35. before they really get involved!

36. Watching is an acceptable activity, please don't push children to participate before they feel ready. Invite -- but take "No" for an answer.

37. The teacher in the art area (as elsewhere) acts as a facilitator.

38. S/he sets up the project before the children arrive, s/he sets more paper and paint when needed, and s/he very gently helps the children figure out how to do the project.

39. But each child does it in his or her own way

40. and the teacher does not criticize their method nor provide a model for them to copy.

41. The teacher is also there to talk in a friendly way with the children

42. and to help them make discoveries about the materials they are using.

43. They also learn incidentals such as colors, shapes,

44. textures and techniques from their art projects.

45. Important social learning takes place throughout the school

46. and especially in the dramatic play area.

47. In order to keep this area of the school fresh and interesting to the children, the theme is changed frequently.

48. It can be a barber shop,

49. Doctor's office,

50. clothing store, housekeeeping area, camping spot,

51. post office, the grocery store you see here, or many other possibilities.

52. Many teachers find that it saves them work to collect materials for these dramatic play activities in prop boxes, to be used when desired by either teacher or children. Our school prop boxes are stored here in the library.

53. Our science display area which you see here in the background will be changed on a weekly or biweekly basis, depending on the topic.

54. The week this was taken, we were studying pears and how they grow.

55. Later in the semester we were finding out about dinosaurs.

56. During this week we were raising monarch butterflies.

57. Raising other kinds of live animals at school is a worthwhile project for young children -- one we will be doing soon this year.

58. These children had the opportunity to observe chickens grow and discover how chicks really feel and how they move and how they smell!

59. This kind of first hand contact is the most valuable kind of learning experience for young children.

60. Science includes cooking! Here Linda is helping the children with the daily snack preparation -- in this case, lemonaide. One student is assigned to the cooking area each day.

61. Cooking encourages the use of language, numbers, all five senses,

62. and is enjoyed by all the children because it builds self-esteem. Cooking is important and adult.

63. The block area gives children an opportunity to make mathematical discoveries...

64. to learn to construct cooperatively with others...and...

65. to be proud of their accomplishments.

66. Part of the fun of block building is knocking them down again. A rug is an essential for this reason! At the end of the first hour of school, the children are expected to participate in cleaning up their school,

67. but the expectation is reasonable. A teacher helps sort and put away.

68. During the first hour of school, all of these activities are offered simultaneously -- Art, Science, Math, Dramatic Play, Blocks, Manipulatives, and Cooking. Each of you will be responsible for one of these areas.

69. You'll know your assigned area for the week before the week starts. Each morning you should review the teacher's bulletin board to make sure you are fully prepared for your project.

70. Just after our mid-morning clean-up time, we all meet together on the gold rug for music. This is a time to relax and enjoy together,

71. to sing some songs, and to do some finger plays,

72. and to share some puppets or other special materials.

73. We will use music time to review body parts, reinforce colors, and extend science concepts.

74. Birthdays are important milestones in the life of a young child. On birthdays each child can celebrate at school by choosing a book from the birthday box,

75. receiving a birthday crown

76. enjoying the happy - birthday song

77. and feeling special.

78. From music we all wash our hands and go to snack time. The teachers encourage conversation among the children and encourage self-help skills.

79. You will notice a teacher in the kitchen helping the boys get more juice for their table and the girl in the foreground sponging up her spill.

80. All of the children are assigned to a small group for story time on the basis of their age and developmental level. We follow Joanne Hendrick's Law -- "The larger the group, the smaller the learning."

81. Young children vary in their maturity -- we try to put the children who can understand the same level of story togethe.. Each group meets in a different location in the school and

82. listens to stories carefully chosen

83. for their developmental level. The youngest group has the shortest storytime and listens to the shortest, simplest stories.

84. Children may have a choice of indoor or outdoor play throughout the day.

85. Usually there will also be a time for all the children to go outside together.

86. Vigorous outdoor play is important to children's health. Swinging activities and use of the body in space may be as important to the development of cognitive as to physical skills.

87. Sand and water play in all their many forms

88. are absorbing and rewarding play experiences for children.

89. Using water, or sand, children learn concepts of quantity, shape, and size as well as practicing fine motor skills.

90. While the children interact, the teachers have the opportunity to observe their individual differences in coping style. Note the difference in the expression of these two girls.

91. Also outside is the use of climbing equipment

92. trikes and swings.

93. and wagons.

94. Sand, dirt and open space all stimulate the use of large muscles and the development of gross motor coordination.

95. Outdoors the theme of caring for living things is continued.

96. These children are preparing a planter box for planting.

97. Outdoors also allows time to chat one-to-one. Getting to know each child as an individual is a teaching style which is highly prized in this program.

98. Student teachers learn when to offer a helping hand

99. and when to hold back tactfully and allow the child to work the problem through on their own.

100. In our program, a lot of emphasis is placed on learning to understand children in a developmental way so that EACH child's needs will be met.

101. At the end of the day in every good program, teachers sit down together and discuss how the day went, how different children responded, and how to make it better tomorrow. We're especially proud that this happens in our schoo' every day.

102. That completes "our day" at nursery school -- I hope you are looking forward to our first day, tomorrow.

APPENDIX E

Solano Community College
Laboratory Nursery School
P.O. Box 246
Suisun City, CA 94585
January 1983

Dear

Welcome to your student teaching experience at Solano Community College. I hope this will be the beginning of a productive and personally gratifying career working with young children. As a friend and fellow nursery school teacher said to me recently, "the longer I do it (teach), the more I like it." I hope the same will be true for you.

The first few weeks may seem strange, that's true for everyone. I have vivid memories of my own first week here when I couldn't find a single thing I needed, each day's mail brought new and mysterious forms to fill out, and the children started arriving a week before I had any student teachers to help. Believe me, your first week is bound to be better than that!

This folder is an attempt to help you through the first hectic weeks and give you survival information for the days ahead. In a week or two, I'll be asking you if it was helpful and what more needs to be included to make it more useful for future students.

As of now, the folder contains:

1. A weekly schedule for the first week of school. I've filled this one out already. In future weeks, we will make these decisions as a group.
2. A set of teaching assignment cards (the 5x8 cards in different colors). Read these cards carefully, each week you will have the teaching responsibility outlined on one of these cards.
3. A set of suggested guidance techniques and school rules.
4. A list of the children who are enrolled this semester, their birthdates, and their age on February 1, 1983. Pay special attention to the children's ages as you look over this list.
5. A list showing snack table and story group assignments.
6. A description of the math materials we will be using.
7. A sample standard alphabet to use as a model when making name tags or display signs.
8. A note pad and pencil. Buy an inexpensive smock or wear clothing with pockets so you can keep this note pad with you while you teach. Use it to jot down observations and impressions of the children along with any questions you may have.

We will have our first staff meeting tomorrow and go over these materials, then. Tonight I'd like to have you read through the materials, make notes of any questions you might have, and bring your folder back with you tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Doyleen McMurtry

MATH
(When Available)

8:30- 9:00	Set up Math activity area. (Box on our shelf in Library).
9:00-10:05	Supervise Math activity table. Keep notes on children who participate.
10:05-10:15	Clean up Math material and replace on shelf.
10:15	MUSIC: Join group on the gold rug and participate in singing.
10:30	SNACK: Supervise assigned group.
	STORY: Stay with your snack group for story.
10:50-11:30	Help supervise outside or prepare materials for the next week.
11:30-11:45	General clean up.
11:45-12:30	STAFF MEETING.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITY

8:30- 9:00	Help outside supervision teacher set up yard. Plan and set up one or more outdoor activities: Water play, carpentry, wood gluing, fence painting, gardening, special walks, etc.
9:00- 9:20	Supervise indoors in Music area.
9:20	(Or whenever outside supervisor goes out) Help supervise in yard. Supervise outside activity.
10:05	PARTIAL CLEAN UP: (Park bikes, clean up paints.)
10:15	MUSIC: Join group on the gold rug and participate in singing.
10:30	SNACK: Supervise assigned group.
	STORY: Join assigned story group.
	OUTSIDE: Plan to be one of the first teachers to go outside. Continue supervision of special activity.
11:25	CLEAN UP.
11:30-11:45	General clean up.
11:45-12:30	STAFF MEETING.

OUTSIDE SUPERVISION

8:30- 9:00	Set up yard (vary set up and activities to spur interest).
9:00- 9:20	Supervise math activity. (If needed)
9:20	(Or when requested) Supervise in yard. Help children care for animals.
10:05	PARTIAL CLEAN UP: (Clean up paints, park bikes).
10:15	MUSIC: Join group on the gold rug and participate in singing.
10:30	SNACK: Supervise assigned group.
	STORY: Join assigned story group.
10:45	OUTSIDE: Plan to be one of the first teachers to go outside. "Float" in yard, redirecting teaching staff as needed.
11:25	Announce clean up in all areas.
11:30-11:45	General clean up.
11:45-12:30	STAFF MEETING.

SCIENCE

8:30- 9:00	Prepare materials for the science experience.
9:00-10:05	Help children with the science experience and/or with cooking.
10:05	CLEAN UP.
10:15	MUSIC: Join group on the gold rug and participate in singing.
10:30	SNACK: Supervise assigned group.
	STORY: Read to assigned story group.
11:25	CLEAN UP: Help remove name tags.
11:30-11:45	General clean up.
11:45-12:30	STAFF MEETING.

ART

8:30- 9:00	Set out prepared art materials, mix paints, set up easels. (Mixing paint can also be a children's activity).
9:00-10:05	Supervise art activities--help children with paper and materials, hang pictures to dry.
10:05-10:15	Help children clean up the table, put away easel paints, put brushes in water (or have children wash).
10:15	MUSIC: Join group on the gold rug and participate in singing.
10:30	SNACK: Supervise assigned group.
	STORY: Join assigned story group.
10:50-11:30	Finish art clean up as needed. Put painting in lockers and hang display pictures.
11:25	Help children remember art work as they leave.
11:30-11:45	General clean up.
11:45-12:30	STAFF MEETING.

COOKING/SNACK

8:30- 9:00	Set up snack trays (4 trays w/cups & napkins). Prepare materials for cooking project.
9:00-10:05	Help children with cooking project.
10:05-10:15	CLEAN UP: Help children complete clean up. Set out a tub of extra water for washing hands.
10:15	MUSIC: Join music group.
	SERVE SNACK: (Wait until a teacher is seated at the table), stay in the kitchen area to help children get extra juice.
	STORY: Help with your assigned story group.
10:45-11:30	Finish kitchen clean up, wipe tables and counters, mop floor as needed.
11:30-11:45	General clean up.
11:45-12:30	STAFF MEETING.

DRAMATIC PLAY

8:30- 9:00	Set up block area and dramatic play area (Housekeeping).
9:00-10:05	Supervise block area and dramatic play.
10:05-10:15	Help children replace blocks and clean up in the house keeping area.
10:15	MUSIC: Join group on the gold rug and participate in singing.
	SNACK: Supervise assigned group.
	STORY: Stay with your snack group.
10:50-11:30	OUTSIDE: Help supervise outside. If needed, come back in at 11:15 to set up dramatic area for P.M.
(11:20)	Help remove name tags.
11:30-11:45	General clean up.
11:45-12:30	STAFF MEETING.

HEAD TEACHER

8:30- 9:00	Set out name tags, give last minute directions to stafff, help set up school.
9:00- 9:15	Remain at the door to greet the children as they come in. Allow the children to find their own nname tags--assist as needed. Help children find their lockers and take roll.
9:15-10:15	"Float" in school, helping children and teacher as needed. Make sure the curriculum goals are met. Change schedule as needed. Take the responsiblity for the math area when the outside supervision teacher goes outside.
10:05	Announce clean up. Assist children as needed.
10:15	MUSIC: Lead the Music time or delegate this responsibility.
10:30	SNACK: Sit with the group where a teacher is needed or sit with the group where you will read.
	STORY: Read to each group of children in turn (1 group each day).
	OUTSIDE: Help supervise--make sure inside jobs are done. Help take off name tags as children leave.
11:30-11:45	General clean up.
11:45-12:30	STAFF MEETING: Lead discussion.

LIBRARY

8:30- 9:00	Set up Library area. Change picture display if needed. Check animal cages.
9:00-10:05	Supervise in Library--read books, play music, set up puppet theater, help children care for and play with animals.
10:05-10:15	Clean up in Library and close Library door. Help with clean up in our larger room.
10:15	MUSIC: Join group on the gold rug and participate in singing.
10:30	SNACK: Supervise assigned group.
	STORY: Join assigned story group.
10:50-11:30	Supervise outside.
(11:25)	Clean up--help take off name tags as children leave.
11:30-11:45	General clean up.
11:45-12:30	STAFF MEETING.

MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES
OR
HOW TO SOUND LIKE AN EXPERIENCED NURSERY SCHOOL TEACHER ON YOUR FIRST DAY IN THE LAB SCHOOL

1. Use positive direction.

This means to avoid telling children what not to do and to focus instead on what they can do. Examples:

"The sand stays in the sandbox."

"Chairs are for sitting on."

"It's time to go in now."

"You can sit down."

2. Time your directions appropriately for children.

In general children require more time to comply with a request than adults do. The confident pause is a valuable tool to learn. When in doubt, wait.

3. Make sure you are not offering children a choice unless a choice really exists.

Asking, "Do you want to...?" is asking a question that has two possible answers, "yes" and "no". If either answer is acceptable then asking the "Do you want to...?" question is acceptable also. However, if what you really mean is, "Now it's time to go in for music."; then say so.

If you slip (as you are bound to do at first) and ask, "Do you want to go in for music now?" Then, you must honor the child's decision. If the child says "no" retreat gracefully, say something like, "OK, you can finish what you're doing and in 3 minutes it will be time to go in."

4. In the same vein, as a teacher, sooner or later you will have to make a decision which will be appropriate but unpopular. For example, if the school has acquired a new and very desirable toy, you may need to decide that a "turn" will be 5 (or 3 or 2) minutes long. In such a case the children will need to comply with your decision but they don't have to like it! Tacking "OK" onto the end of your request, as in:

"Your turn is over, it's time to give the game to John now, OK?" requires the child to do two things.

1. To give the game to John.
2. To agree with the teacher's decision.

Keep it simple, and keep in mind that feelings are different from behavior.

5. Attention paid to aggressive behaviors acts to increase aggression. Three things to do instead:

A. Please notice and comment favorably on the non-aggressive, prosocial behaviors children display.

"Thanks for giving Tim a turn on the fast bike."

"I like the way you shared your playdough with Mark."

"You and Sarah had a good time playing together."

B. Ignore the aggressive behaviors that do occur and focus on the problem.

"You seem to have a difficulty can you tell me about it?"...."Did you both want this bike? How can we solve this problem?" Help the children come up with the ideas by waiting and giving them time to think. Make it clear that you expect them to reach a decision acceptable to both.

Younger children often need help to talk to each other, as in...

"What did you want Mark? Can you tell Tom about it?

And, when all else fails:

"Do you like it when George hits you? Tell George you don't like it."

C. Validate the child's feelings.

The rule at this school is that feelings are always acceptable. Your feelings are your own and you are entitled to them. Limits are placed on behaviors, never on feelings. A simple remark like, "That really made you feel angry." shows acceptance of the child and helps children recognize their own emotional state - a first step to self possession.

6. Remember that your behavior is a model for the children to follow. Think about what you are doing. If you don't want children yelling inside the school, don't use a loud voice yourself. If you don't want children stepping on the chairs don't use a chair as a step stool.

7. Keep a low profile, use a soft voice, and stay in your assigned area.

8. Try to watch for and anticipate difficulties. Move towards trouble spots, not away. Signals to watch for include: loud excited voices, groups of milling children, and verbal (or physical) threats.

9. In a smoothly running program teachers exchange information constantly but never stop to chat. Save lengthy questions, comments, speculations, and "cute" stories for our daily staff meeting.

RULES OF THE SCHOOL

Our goal is to have as few rules as possible, for teachers as well as children! The best teaching doesn't follow rules. However, when you first begin it does help to feel that you know what's going on, so.....

RULES FOR PARENTS

1. Children are expected to enter through the nursery school gate and not through the door from the hallway. Please redirect any parents you see trying to enter this way.
2. Parents should accompany their child all the way into the school, and not just leave them at the gate.
3. Parents are requested to direct all their questions about their child to the Master Teacher. If a parent should ask you about their child, suggest that they ask Doyleen.
4. During school hours, the teachers are in charge. If necessary, make clear to the parents what their limits are. For example, "you can't spank your child at school, it's too frightening for the other children."

RULES FOR CHILDREN

1. Inside toys stay inside and outside toys stay outside.
2. Children are required to attend music, snack, and story time. They are not required to participate by singing, eating, or listening.
3. Children are not allowed to hurt each other at school.

RULES FOR TEACHERS

1. Smile
2. Relax
3. Enjoy!

HEAD TEACHER WEEK

Each student will take the responsibility of planning a week of activities and serving as the Head Teacher for that week. You will know early in the semester when your week will be so you will have plenty of time to plan. Doyleen is available as a sounding board and source of curriculum suggestions. Also, don't hesitate to bring your ideas to our daily staff meeting and solicit suggestions and comments from the whole staff. The most successful curriculum ideas usually reflect the interest and involvement of all the teachers.

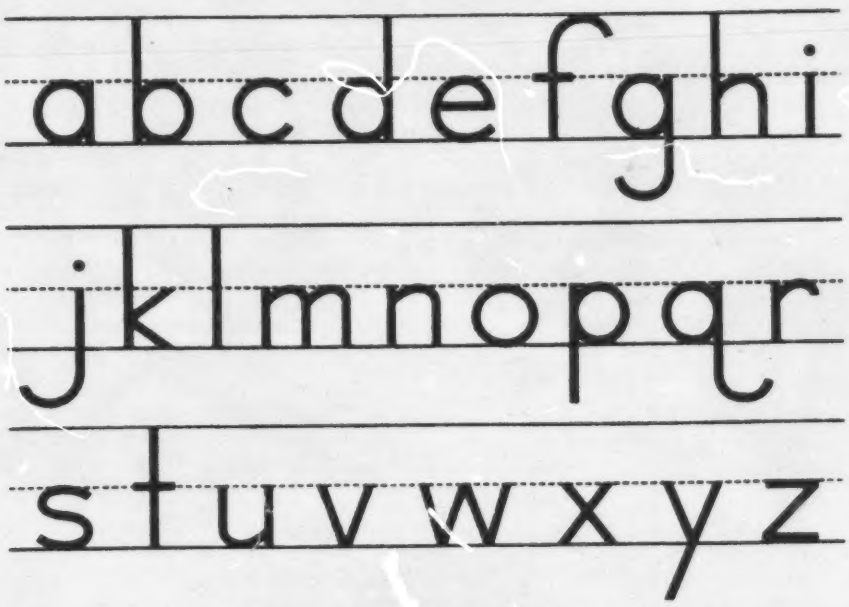
When planning your Head Teacher week, think first about a five day program designed to provide a progressive elaboration of thematic content and concepts throughout the week. Do not try to duplicate Monday-Wednesday-Friday activities on Tuesday and Thursday, with the possible exception of very special, desirable activities. Keep in mind that the children who attend only on Tuesday and Thursday are usually younger and less experienced with school activities.

SOME ORGANIZATIONAL DETAILS:

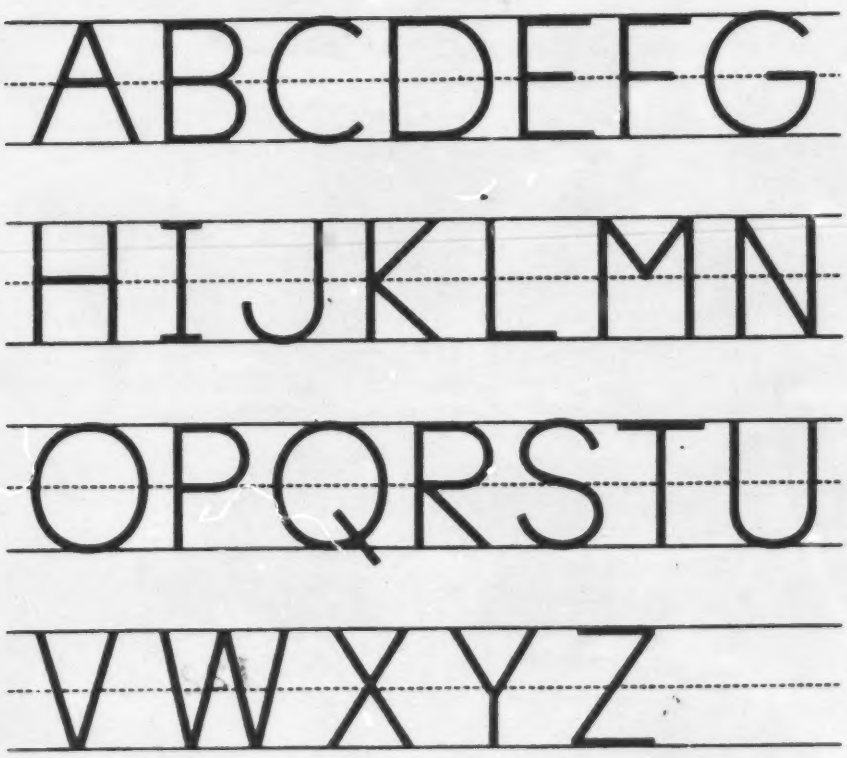
1. If you wish to laminate the name tags for your Head Teacher week, allow at least one and preferably two weeks for completion. The wall paper is free and works as well as the lamination, if you can find patterns usable for your theme.
2. If you plan a Field Trip, the campus requires two and preferably three weeks advanced notice and compliance with the new California safety seat/belt restraints is mandatory.
3. Plan to lead the music time the Friday before your Head Teacher week. This will give you the opportunity to introduce the next week's theme and, if possible, involve the children in the next week's plans.

The Alphabet

Small Letters



Large Letters



Doyleen McMurtry, Head Teacher

SOLANO COLLEGE NURSERY SCHOOL

WORKJOBS II - NUMBER ACTIVITIES

HOW TO USE THE MATERIALS

Read through the book Workjobs II by Mary Baratta-Lorton to familiarize yourself with the physical nature of the materials and with the upper range of possibilities for their use. Then follow the instructions on this sheet. These number activity instructions have been modified for use with younger children than Mary Baratta-Lorton intended. We will be using the materials to build language concepts; practice small muscle coordination skills; experience counting, sorting, and classifying; and helping children achieve one-to-one correspondence; all in a warm, supportive, interpersonal situation. Keep in mind that attainment of one-to-one correspondence is developmental. We cannot teach one-to-one correspondence but by offering rich and varied experience with the concept we allow children ample opportunity to construct their own reality when they are ready to do so.

DIRECTIONS FOR USE

I. Choose one of the Workjobs II activities with which to work. Choose carefully - there are many choices - consider the season of the year, the next holiday, the theme plan for school this week, and/or the kind of snack we will have today. Choose an activity which will extend and enhance the other curriculum areas of the school.

II. Choose a quiet table out of the line of traffic. Place the materials on the table attractively. You may wish to divide the counters into small cups so that each child can have their own.

III. This will not be an individual project for preschoolers since few preschoolers would be able to manage all eight boards. You may be working with one child or with a small group. Four is a good maximum, tell additional children you will call them when it is their turn - keep a list of names so you can!

IV. Follow the children's lead as much as possible while using the materials. Initially we will allow each of the children to freely explore the materials. Please keep track on the attached form of the children who come to your table. If a child counts spontaneously note the highest number to which he counts accurately and record it in the folder. See the following page for activity suggestions.

INITIAL ACTIVITIES

These activities are for all children at first, and can be continuing activities for children who do not have one-to-one correspondence.

Encourage the children to arrange the counters as they wish. They may wish to make a pattern or role play an activity or situation. As they are doing this talk about the materials. You can point out: colors, textures, a couple, many, all,), as well as similarities and differences.

When you think a child is ready, take a card yourself, add one counter and comment "I have one," ** If the child says "I have one too." you have a choice

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of comment. If the child does have one counter you can agree with him, add another counter to your board and say "Now I have two." etc. If the child has more than one you could say "Yes, you have one here (point) and you have many others too." or you could say "You have many (or lots) I have one."

EXPANSION ACTIVITIES

Those activities are for children who have one-to-one correspondence for one or several objects and who have had the opportunity to explore the materials.

1. Ask the child to count objects for you, then choose a smaller number than the last number the child could count with assurance.
2. Think up games involving adding one more counter or subtracting one counter ie.
   "One fish swam away". (or got caught)
   "We picked one strawberry." (or one green and one red apple)
   Keep it fun.
3. Comment on the various combinations that make up a number, "You have two yellow fish and two orange fish".
4. Give the child several boards and ask the child to put the same number of fish on each one. If the task is too difficult reduce the number of fish or the number of boards. If the task is easily accomplished gradually increase the number of counters and the number of boards.
5. For older preschoolers who can count 10 objects with ease and confidence, try the following. Assess for numeral recognition (show them the numerals, cards and see if they recognize them). Using the recognized numerals, allow the child to place the numeral cards on their game cards and add that number of counters. Point out the combinations frequently, ie. "You have seven, four green and three brown."
   BE SURE TO RECORD THE HIGHEST NUMERAL YOU HAVE ASKED THE CHILD TO COMPLETE.
4. For the few children able to complete the numeral cards quickly and easily the easier addition equations could be introduced.

**Expand this number as appropriate.

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APPENDIX F

Role Play Situations Used in Student Teacher Training

The following situations were used as one of the extended activities to the preservice orientation program reported in this practicum. The particular situations chosen by the Master Teacher were related to recent events in the school and therefore had maximum relevance to the student teachers. The students were divided into groups of three and each student in the group was given a cue card to describe their role. Each individual played each role in each situation before moving to the next situation.

SET #1

Observer
1. Starts action
2. Observes closely and makes notes if needed
3. Stops action at 8 minutes, or before if closure is achieved
4. Debriefs actors, "How were you feeling when ...."
5. Shares observations

Child
You are a four-year-old child who has been abruptly rejected by another child you like very much. ("Don't sit by me, I don't like you!") You sit looking very sad, almost in tears.

Teacher
You are the teacher who has observed the rejection and distress of child #1. How will you help?

SET #2

Observer

1. Starts action
2. Observes closely and makes notes if needed
3. Stops action at 8 minutes, or before if closure is achieved
4. Debriefs actors, "How were you feeling when ...."
5. Shares observations

Child

You are a 3 1/2 year old child who has removed <u>all</u> the unit blocks. The teacher has asked you to put them away, but you decline to help and start to wander away.

Teacher

It is clean-up time and you have asked child #2 to put away his/her blocks. He/she has refused and starts to walk away.

APPENDIX G

COMMERCIAL MATERIALS RECOMMENDED FOR ORIENTATION PURPOSES
BY CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY

NAEYC A Guide to Discipline

Nurok, Esther Now You're a Student Teacher. SCAE/C.

Machado, Jeanne "A Text for Student Teachers" to be published.

"The Preschool Experience" from T.V. Program "The Growing Years"

Text: Feeney and Christiansen Who Am I in the Lives of Children?

Film: "My Art is Me"

FS "Separation in Day Care Mondays & Fridays" (Pacific Oaks)

FS "Right Ingredients" (Pacific Oaks)

APPENDIX H

SUCCESSFUL ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

(Summarized from the California Community College Survey)

California Community College responses to questions 13 & 14 on the Community College Survey, "Orientation Programs for On-Campus Field Practice Placements" (Appendix C), are summarized below. Where both questions were answered, the answers from each college to each question are numbered identically. Double asteriks indicate the same response was made (i.e., the identical answer was given) to each of the two questions. Those responses not numbered indicate the respondant answered only one of the two questions.

Q 13: Are there any orientation activities which seem particularly successful with your students who are below average in intellectual ability?

1. Not aware of any
2. No!! This is usually coupled with other below average ability in socialization skills, self-understanding, emotional readiness for teaching, etc., etc.
3.** All students treated basically alike.
4.** Preparing an area for children's activity.
5. We have an elaborate tutoring program at ---. We choose one competent advanced child development student to be tutor. All students are evaluated.

6. Step-by-step demonstrations in the classroom.

7. One to one help (modeling) for 1st lab sessions.

8.** Yes, visiting the center for on-the-spot orientation. Working the first week as children enter gradually. There is more staff time to help them become aware of the center program.

9. Individualized conferencing with as much "instant feedback" as one can manage.

10. 1. Age-growth and development fact sheets.

2. Classroom observation forms to guide them.

11. Hands-on activities.

12. One-to-one counseling/discussion student with instructor.

13.** I'm not aware of ability levels.

* No, I feel orientation is quite insufficient and needs to be ongoing.

* Campus requires reading at 10th grade level.

* No, this is accomplished through on - the - job training. Department Chairman also coordinates Child Development lab to assure consistency between theory and practice.

* Individual consultation.

* We will try videotaping.

* First lab assignment has tasks which require students to locate info bulletin boards, learn routines, etc.

* Tour and outlining duties - also Tb clearances.

Q 14: Are there any orientation activities which seem particularly successful with your students who are above average in intellectual ability?

1. Role play problem situations.
2. Extended opportunities to prepare and implement lessons.
3. ** All students treated basically alike.
4. ** Preparing an area for children's activity.
5. Not aware of any -- yet we've had no complaints from anyone in this category.
6. Participation followed by discussion.
7. Group questions and answers.
8.** Yes, visiting the center for on-the-spot orientation. Working the first week as children enter gradually. There is more staff time to help them become aware of the center program.
9. Preparation and planning in advance. Students maintain lab diary on daily basis.
10. Less emphasis on review of growth and development and more on skill areas that can be developed through play and activities.
11. Suggested reading they can do before children start.
12. Self evaluations at end of each week. Told they may bring or plan extra projects for the center.
13.** I'm not aware of ability levels.

* Visitation of various types of schools and observing Master Teachers at work sites.